# PROVINCIAL RESPONSE

to the
Resolutions of the 2014
Union of British Columbia Municipalities
Convention

Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development
February, 2015

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**SR1 Strong Fiscal Futures**

WHEREAS the UBCM membership unanimously endorsed the Strong Fiscal Futures report at the 2013 Convention;

AND WHEREAS UBCM has sought to engage the Province on strengthening the local government finance system and improving taxpayer value through a spirit of collaboration and partnership;

AND WHEREAS the Province, through the "Core Review" process, without consultation with UBCM, identified areas of provincial concern with the local government finance system:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM urge the Province to commit to meaningful engagement under the Strong Fiscal Futures framework in order to meet our respective mandates of strengthening the local government finance system.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development**

The directions contained in Strong Fiscal Futures and the Province's Taxpayer Accountability Principles provide a foundation to engage in dialogue between the Province and UBCM. To make progress on issues our organizations have identified over the past year, the Province and UBCM should move to establish a more collaborative and practical working relationship.

The Province recognizes that key to making future collaboration successful is to schedule regular meetings between the Minister of Community, Sport and Cultural Development and members of the UBCM Executive. With local government elections now complete, the Province is working with UBCM to secure several meeting dates for 2015.

By creating more structure and opportunities for regular dialogue, the Province and UBCM will better address our shared duty to ensure the delivery of effective, responsive services to citizens.

**A1 Strategic Wildfire Prevention Initiative**

WHEREAS the Strategic Wildfire Prevention Initiative is a suite of funding programs administered through the Provincial Fuel Management Working Group and has supported communities to mitigate wildfires within the urban interface since 2004;

AND WHEREAS the Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen has been participating in the Strategic Wildfire Prevention Initiative from the beginning, and over 150 hectares of fuel management projects have been completed, although since 2011 there has been significant reduction in the funding levels:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM request the Province of BC increase the funding to ensure continued sustainability of the Strategic Wildfire Prevention Initiative program.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations**

Since 2004, over $61 million has been directed through the Strategic Wildfire Prevention Initiative to help local governments and First Nations significantly reduce wildfire risks around their communities. Projects totalling $5.5 million are underway in 2014/15 and 2015/16.

As of June 30, 2014, 276 Community Wildfire Protection Plans have been completed by local governments and First Nations. Another 38 are in progress. The Province is presently considering its options to provide continued support for the Strategic Wildfire Prevention Initiative.

Local governments have a role to play in implementing FireSmart bylaws for new development in urban interface areas and some jurisdictions have already done so. Likewise, homeowners who live in urban interface areas are being encouraged to FireSmart their properties.

**A2 Medical Emergency Service Alarm Cost Recovery**

WHEREAS the number of first responder or medical emergency service alarm (MESA) calls that the City of Langley responds to represents 78 percent of all calls received by the Langley City Fire Rescue Service (LCFRS);

AND WHEREAS the City of Langley incurs significant direct costs as a result of responding to MESA calls to compliment the services provided by BC Ambulance Service (BCAS);

AND WHEREAS the intermediate patient care can greatly enhance patient outcomes and significantly reduce short term and long term costs to the overall health care system and the City of Langley acknowledges the community will benefit from the LCFRS supporting BCAS to provide first responder services to the patient while the ambulance is en-route:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Province of BC work with UBCM to develop a fair and equitable cost recovery model to compensate local governments for responding to medical first responder calls.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Health**

Government values the role that first responders play in pre-hospital care and recognizes the importance to taxpayers that we use our emergency response resources appropriately, whether it is in local or provincial government.

Participation in the First Responder program is voluntary. Some municipalities have chosen to have first responders continue to attend both urgent and routine (non-emergency) calls, but others have elected to have first responders attend only urgent calls where a patient's condition will benefit from initial care.

BC Emergency Health Services has been actively reaching out to concerned municipalities over the last several months and will continue to consult with local governments and first responders throughout the Province about the changes to the Resource Allocation Plan.

Additionally, BC Emergency Health Services has several working groups in place that were created to help resolve concerns that may arise for first responders with respect to the services they provide. They also provide reimbursement for initial training costs for new first responder agencies, as well as reimbursement for all medical supplies for first responder agencies serving small communities (under 25,000).

## A3 Agricultural Land Reserve & Agricultural Land Commission

WHEREAS the Agricultural Land Commission created as an autonomous body in 1974, has served to protect over four million hectares of farmland in the Province of British Columbia;

AND WHEREAS measures to protect farmland and support farmers and regional food systems are essential to provide food security in the face of increasing global transportation and energy costs and the impacts of climate change:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM request that the provincial government respect the integrity of the province-wide Agricultural Land Reserve and support its management by an independent and adequately funded Agricultural Land Commission;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Provincial Government work with the agricultural community, UBCM and local governments to identify and implement additional measures that will increase the viability of farming and food production in British Columbia.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Agriculture**

The Province of British Columbia continues to be committed to the Agricultural Land Reserve and the protection of agricultural land to support farmers and farm families. In spring 2014, the Province enacted improvements to the *Agricultural Land Commission Act* (ALCA) that will continue to protect farmland in British Columbia and maintain the Agricultural Land Commission's (ALC) independence.

The spring 2014 amendments to the ALCA will assist farmers and farm families to flourish by recognizing regional differences, strengthening regional decision making and enhancing the ALC's service to the public.

In addition, the Province has provided new funding for the ALC, including $1.6 million in 2011 and another $4 million over three years in Budget 2013. These funds are to increase the ALC's capacity to conduct boundary reviews, increase compliance and enforcement and work more closely with local governments, farmers, ranchers and agricultural organizations to preserve agricultural land and encourage farming.

The Province is committed to promoting additional measures to increase the viability of farming and food production through Growing Forward 2 funding for innovative projects, expanding foreign and domestic market opportunities, and promoting local agri-foods products.

## A4 Worker Camp Permitting

WHEREAS current provincial licensing requirements for establishment of worker camps involve multiple authorities without effective inter-agency coordination thereby detracting from local government's ability to achieve maximum regional prosperity and social equity:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that as a condition to establishing a worker camp, the Province be requested to establish a single window approval process for all industries that allows for comment from any agency, regulator and local government that has interest in the operation, safety, health and socioeconomic impacts associated with the camp.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development**

The issue of work camps is not necessarily a gap in the regulatory framework, but rather, a need for improved communication and coordination between local governments, proponents and regulatory agencies. The Ministry is actively pursuing improved engagement between local governments, the proponents and regulatory agencies to ensure a complete understanding of responsibilities and to ensure fair and appropriate responses.

In response to concerns raised by local governments, in particular around the larger scale projects that necessitate an Environmental Assessment Certificate (EAC) and the resultant socio-economic impacts, the Ministry has taken a leading role in coordination with the Environmental Assessment Office (EAO) establish the Socio-Economic Effects Management Plan (SEEMP) framework as an EA condition.

The new SEEMP framework supports the Ministry's mandate to support local governments and residents to build vibrant and healthy communities that are well governed, economically stable, socially and environmentally responsible.

The intent of the SEEMP is to ensure a clear and defined role for an EA certificate holder in identifying, quantifying and mitigating (or contributing to the mitigation of) socio-economic effects on community-level services and infrastructure arising from construction of the certificate holders project. A SEEMP is a stand-alone project specific plan that ties in and builds on existing conditions of the EAC and is agreed to by the Ministry.

A SEEMP is required to build upon the EAC application to provide more current and detailed descriptions of the anticipated socio-economic effects related to a project, how the certificate holder intends to carry out the necessary measures to mitigate those effects (wholly or in part) and to monitor and report upon the actual economic and social effects of the project once it is underway.

This proposed model could be defined as one that guarantees a clear and collaborative process to jointly identifying and mitigating effects with proponents and impacted communities.

## A5 Industrial Taxation of Liquefied Natural Gas Industry

WHEREAS the provincial government has indicated that it is considering, as part of a liquefied natural gas (LNG) regime for the Province of BC, capping increases of property tax rates for LNG-related industrial properties;

AND WHEREAS the UBCM, with the support of the provincial government, has long held to the following principles, most recently affirmed in the member-endorsed 2008 policy paper, "Financing Local Government: Achieving Fiscal Balance:"

The ultimate determination of the local public interest in terms of local responsibilities lies with locally elected representatives; including the freedom to determine the level of local services, expenditures and taxation;

Local government should have the necessary legislative powers to meet its responsibilities, the power to ensure its policies and financial programs are mutually supporting, and the discretion and flexibility to determine the most appropriate methods of meeting the local needs; and Property taxation distribution must be the responsibility of local government; it should be based on actual value assessment and grants in lieu of taxes paid by other governments and their agencies should be paid on the same basis as the ordinary taxpayer:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM urge the provincial government to refrain from considering or implementing a cap on local government's ability to set property tax rates for industrial properties related to the liquefied natural gas industry.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development**

The Province remains committed to local government tax autonomy. However, this autonomy must be set within the broader context of economic development for the benefit of all British Columbians. Thus, on several previous occasions, the Province has legally limited municipal tax autonomy by statute (e.g., *Ports Property Tax Act*), regulation (e.g., Taxation Rate Cap for Class 2 [Utility] Property Regulation), and letters patent.

The Province is concerned with a competitive tax regime for LNG facilities in BC. It also recognizes that municipalities play an important role in realizing the LNG opportunity. The Province is encouraging discussion between proponent and local governments to arrive at agreement on competitive and fair financial arrangements, including property taxation.

## A6 Recycling Services in Rural & Small Communities

WHEREAS the Minister of Environment approved a Packaging and Printed Paper Stewardship Plan that allows the producers of packaging and printed paper to achieve a province wide recovery rate of 75% and the producers can meet this recovery rate by focusing service delivery in denser and more populated regions of the province and consequently avoid service delivery in rural and small communities;

AND WHEREAS many of the rural and small communities will not have access to collection services even though these communities have retail services that will be paying fees to a stewardship agency in support of the operation of collection services for residential packaging and printed paper products:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM request that the Minister of Environment amend the Recycling Regulation to require that stewardship plans ensure that in any community where a regulated product or material is retailed to a residential consumer that collection services for these same products be made available.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Environment**

The issue of rural service delivery for Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) programs dates back several years and is one that the Ministry of Environment is very conscious of – especially with the recent rollout of the Packaging and Printed Paper (PPP) EPR program being administered by Multi-Material BC (MMBC).

The Recycling Regulation, as it stands, does have several very specific service delivery requirements, including: a 75 percent recovery rate; the producer paying the costs of collecting and managing the products; and stewardship agencies fulfilling the performance measures within their approved stewardship plans. The regulation does not prescribe how this recovery rate will be achieved, but it is addressed in EPR plans. For PPP, a regulated 75 percent recovery rate by regional districts could have meant servicing only Prince George in the Fraser-Fort George RD, so the Ministry required MMBC's plan to address the issue of rural service delivery. To start, this meant maintaining both the provincial collection rate during the first three years of the plan and existing service levels for households currently receiving curbside or depot services. Then, as a 75 percent recovery rate requires an almost 50 percent increase in PPP materials collected and urban areas are already well serviced, rural areas may see the most new services in the future.

Although for PPP these regulatory requirements and performance measures will not initially be reported to the Ministry by MMBC until January 2015, the Ministry is well-aware of service 'gaps' that exist in many rural communities. Initial indications are that these 'gaps' exist for a number of reasons: local jurisdictions declined the financial incentives offered by MMBC; or accepted but with conditions unacceptable to MMBC; or were too late in replying. With regard to MMBC, often the reason was: it could not secure service contractors in areas due to high costs; or its depot model did not align with current depot services offered; or it was unable to identify and attract all eligible PPP producers in time to fund a complete program rollout.

Put in context, PPP is the largest and most complex EPR program in the history of BC and it is still very much in its infancy. Nonetheless, to date some 170 collection agreements are in place with local governments and other collectors across the Province that have found ways to overcome many issues with MMBC. Therefore, the Ministry has allocated additional staff and

resources towards assisting both MMBC and various local governments with revisiting outstanding issues and finding common ground onto which we can collectively finish building the comprehensive program envisioned. This may involve revisiting the EPR regulation itself.

## B1 Municipal Boundary Extensions

WHEREAS municipalities have the ability to apply for boundary expansions with no ability for affected rural residents to influence such applications;

AND WHEREAS such boundary expansions can have a significant impact on the rural residents and funding of the services they receive within the proposed expansion area:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM request the Province of British Columbia to review their policy in regards to boundary expansions to include an assent by referendum for those areas to be annexed.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development**

A boundary extension proposal should have the support of a majority of residents and property owners from the area of extension. The most appropriate method of gauging support from residents and property owners depends on the size of the area of extension and means appropriate to the municipality. In circumstances where there are few electors, requesting the consent or concerns of the property owners is more convenient for the property owners and more efficient for the municipality.

Under the *Local Government Act*, the Minister has the authority to order an assent vote of the electors in the proposed boundary extension area, which is done when the area's population is significant or the proposal is controversial.

For a boundary extension application to be considered complete by the Ministry, the municipality must provide documentation of its referral of the proposed boundary extension to the regional district for comments. Once the regional district receives the referral, it is up to the regional district to articulate potential impacts on the remaining portion of the electoral area. Where a proposed boundary extension would significantly harm the services to remaining rural residents, mitigation may be required from the municipality to reduce the negative impact.

## B3 Resources to Support Sexually Exploited Children & Youth

WHEREAS the issue of sexual exploitation of children and youth is an increasing problem in communities throughout the province;

AND WHEREAS the provincial government has ceased funding toward services that support communities to develop prevention, education, enforcement and intervention strategies to address the sexual exploitation of children and youth:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM request the provincial government to identify the issue of sexual exploitation of children and youth as a priority and reinstate long term, dedicated funding for communities throughout the province to develop and maintain services for sexually exploited children and youth.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Children and Family Development**

Addressing sexual exploitation of children and youth remains a priority for the Province of British Columbia. A collaborative response from a number of ministries and levels of governments, along with police is required to effectively target sexual exploitation.

The Ministry Children and Family Development and its service partners in the Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Education and Ministry of Health (via Health Authorities) continue to support young persons who may be caught in such exploitation. While child welfare legislation primarily addresses the care of children within their family home, the Ministry has established and continues to fund a number of services that support sexually exploited children and youth.

The Ministry annually allocates over $23 million to contracted community youth support services, which focus on at-risk and high-risk children and youth to help them leave homelessness, street entrenchment and situations of sexual exploitation. The aim is to help such youth return to family, enter into a longer-term service plan with the Ministry (e.g., foster care or Youth Agreement), or connect with other available community services. Funded services include youth outreach and support workers and approximately 85 safe house and emergency shelter beds province-wide.

Funds for contracted community youth support services are distributed to the Ministry Service Delivery Area's that determine, in partnership with communities, where best to allocate funds at the local level.

In addition, the Ministry invests approximately $5 million annually for Sexual Abuse Intervention Programs (SAIP) to support children who have experienced sexual abuse, as well as their families and to reduce potential vulnerability to further sexual exploitation. These services are delivered by 49 ministry-contracted SAIP agencies across the province and are also available through the Ministry's community-based Child and Youth Mental Health teams.

## B4 Adequate Funding to Support Police Based Victim Services

WHEREAS the Provincial Police Based Victim Services Program provides valuable support and referral services to victims of crime and trauma in BC communities;

AND WHEREAS the provincial government does not fully fund this program which is affecting the ability for community victim services programs to provide proper services to support our victims of crime:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM request the Province of British Columbia to provide adequate funding to support the Police Based Victim Services Program.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Justice**

The Ministry of Justice has a funding formula in place to distribute available funding dollars for victim service programs throughout the province. The formula is based on population and was updated in fiscal year 2008/09, which resulted in an average funding increase of 22 percent per program.

Police-based victim service programs are cost shared with local governments in communities that contribute to their policing costs. This cost-sharing approach recognizes the critical role that police-based victim service programs play in police and community response to crime and trauma, particularly around crisis response services.

The Province provides over $70 million annually in funding for services to support victims of crime including $12 million for victim service programs, $16 million for violence against women programs, $12 for the Crime Victim Assistance Program and $32 million for transition house services.

## B5 Restorative Justice Program Funding

WHEREAS the Restorative Justice program provides a great value to communities and to the provincial government by resolving certain criminal incidents outside of the formal criminal justice system, therefore reducing provincial costs of the court system;

AND WHEREAS current provincial funding to the program is limited:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM request that the provincial government consider greater funding to cost share in the Restorative Justice programs across the province.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Justice**

Through the Community Accountability Program, the Province of British Columbia provides funding to community-based restorative justice programs to support volunteer training, volunteer recognition and to offset administrative costs. In addition, programs may be eligible for enrollment in the Province's Master Insurance Program.

The Province has also supported the delivery of responsive and effective community-based restorative justice approaches in BC by providing training opportunities for restorative justice service providers.

In May 2013, the Ministry of Justice funded a series of regional trainings for contracted Community Accountability Programs delivered in partnership with the Community Justice Initiatives Association. The training goals included ensuring consistent, quality service delivery taking into account victims' needs and issues and increasing capacity to accept referrals of increased diversity and complexity.

In May 2014, with funding leveraged from the federal Department of Justice, key professionals from police-based victim service programs and community-based restorative justice programs across BC came together to participate in a two-day symposium on building stronger relationships and identifying best practices to build stronger relationships between police- based victim service programs and restorative justice programs.

**B6 Rural RCMP Staffing Levels**

WHEREAS the RCMP provides policing in rural communities;

AND WHEREAS RCMP staff shortages produce a grave threat to the public;

AND WHEREAS staff shortages can be identified by RCMP audit:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the provincial government increase the number of RCMP members at detachments that have identified staff shortages through RCMP audit.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Justice**

Under the *Police Act*, the Minister of Justice is responsible for overseeing policing and ensuring an adequate and effective level of policing and law enforcement is maintained throughout the province.

In these fiscally challenging times, it is increasingly imperative to find innovative solutions to meet public expectations for the delivery of police services and address increasing costs. Government has set this as a priority for the RCMP.

The RCMP reviewed existing rural services to implement new policing models, where appropriate, that will improve policing in remote and rural areas while ensuring member and public safety. With government approval, some of the restructured service delivery models have already been implemented in high priority detachments, including the addition of member(s) to those detachments.

**B9 Medical Transportation**

WHEREAS patients in rural and remote communities require medical attention in larger centers within the Province;

AND WHEREAS a current lack exists for accessible transportation to return patients to their home communities after treatment:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM urge the provincial Health Minister to provide residents requiring medical care within the province with appropriate means to return to their homes in rural and remote communities.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Health**

Transportation for patients who require medical care en route in British Columbia is provided by BC Ambulance Service (BCAS). For non-emergency transport to access health care services in another community, and return home again, individuals are responsible for arranging and paying for travel.

The Ministry recognizes travel costs associated with accessing health services can be a hardship for patients, particularly those from rural and remote areas. Accordingly, the Ministry funds three programs to help alleviate some of the transportation costs for eligible BC residents who must travel within the province for non-emergency medical specialist services not available in their own community, namely: 1) Health Connections; 2) the British Columbia Family Residence Program; and, 3) the Travel Assistance Program.

Four of the six health authorities (Northern, Interior, Vancouver Coastal and Vancouver Island) participate in the Health Connections Program to assist patients with transportation options to access health services and to return home again. The BC Family Residence Program provides accommodation subsidies for families with a child, aged 18 years and under, who requires medical care at BC Children's Hospital or Sunny Hill Health Centre for Children. The Travel Assistance Program is a corporate partnership coordinated between the Ministry and private transportation carriers, who agree to waive or discount their regular fees for eligible individuals covered by the Medical Services Plan when they must travel to access non-emergency health care services.

In some instances, patients can also procure funding from charities and/or other third-party sources:

- Hope Air is a national charity that provides air transportation for patients of all ages who cannot afford to fly to receive the medical care they require;
- Federal programs (e.g., Veteran Affairs Canada, Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada) may cover some travel fees for their clients;
- Some private plans may assist with the costs of patient transportation (e.g., ICBC, WorkSafeBC and private insurers, such as Pacific Blue Cross);

The Ministry of Technology, Innovation and  maintains a courtesy listing of hotels in BC that provide discounted accommodation rates for individuals and families who must stay away from home overnight to obtain medical care; and,

As per the Canada Revenue Agency, travel expenses for medical treatment may be claimed if the patient has travelled more than 40 km from home and specified conditions are met on their income tax return.

**B10 Port Property Tax Caps**

WHEREAS in 2004 the provincial government introduced temporary municipal tax rate restrictions (caps) until 2018 on ports under the *Ports Property Tax Act* in order to make BC ports more attractive to Canadian and international investors;

AND WHEREAS these port property tax rate caps were made permanent in 2014;

AND WHEREAS the provincial government does not compensate local governments with ports for the full loss of property tax revenue resulting from these port property tax rate caps;

AND WHEREAS these provincially imposed port property tax caps therefore interfere with the ability of:

- local governments with ports to access adequate financial resources to support community needs, contrary to Section 1(2)(a) of the *Community Charter;* and
- local governments to determine the appropriate level of municipal taxation, contrary to Section 1(2)(d) of the *Community Charter;*

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the provincial government eliminate port property tax rate caps by repealing the applicable provisions of the *Ports Property Tax Act* in the fall of 2014.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Finance**

The *Ports Property Tax Act* (PPTA) was created in 2004 in response to concerns from marine terminal operators that rising and uncertain municipal taxes on industrial land were impeding investments and putting BC port terminals at a competitive disadvantage. The temporary provisions of the PPTA were extended in 2007 and made permanent in Budget *2014*. Studies show significant new investments in this critical industry.

The PPTA provides a cap on municipal tax rates for existing marine port facilities of $27.5/$1000 and a lower cap on new port investments or improvements of $22.5/$1000. Compensation is provided to host communities based on assessments and tax rates that prevailed when the program was introduced. That compensation is embedded in the PPTA and amounts are increased annually by inflation. Further, new investments result in new tax revenues for host municipalities.

The Province is naturally very reluctant to impinge on municipal tax freedom. However, BC is Canada's Pacific Gateway and transportation is a key support for economic growth and development. It serves the dual purpose of generating direct employment and underpinning job creation and development throughout BC.

The Province has made the PPTA permanent and is not considering repealing the tax rate caps.

## B12 Income Exemption for Child Support Payments

WHEREAS one out of seven children in BC live in poverty and the poverty rate for children headed by lone-parent families is one of the highest poverty rates of any family type;
AND WHEREAS the Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation claws back child support payments dollar for dollar although the financial loss to families far outweighs the gains for the provincial government, and it is recognized that child support payments are the right of the child:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the provincial government amend the Employment and Assistance Regulation and the Employment and Assistance for People with Disabilities Regulation to add an unearned income exemption for child support payments up to $300 per family unit per month.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation**

The Government of B.C. recognizes the importance of family maintenance for families receiving disabilities and income assistance.

From December 3, 2013, to March 11, 2014, Government consulted with British Columbians to better understand how government, businesses and communities can increase accessibility and decrease barriers for people living with disabilities. Providing an exemption for child support payments for disability assistance clients was one of the ideas raised by members of the public during this consultation.

As part of Accessibility 2024, the government made a commitment to consult on family maintenance payments for families receiving disability assistance and income assistance.

This consultation is currently underway and will run until February 28, 2015. Any changes or improvements identified will then be considered by government.

In addition to their rate, families on income assistance have full access to a range of federal and provincial tax credits and benefits that are delivered through the income tax system. These programs constitute a large part of the financial assistance received by families and include the Canada Child Tax Benefit, the National Child Benefit Supplement/BC Family Bonus, the BC Climate Action Credit and others. A single parent with two children under 6 can get almost $900 per month in these benefits. And starting in 2015, the BC Early Childhood Tax Benefit will provide these families with another $55 per month, per child.

The Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation considers child and spousal support (family maintenance) payments to be unearned income.

Unearned income also includes other income sources such as the Canada Pension Plan and Employment Insurance. These payments provide basic financial means and support from sources other than income assistance. Clients must access these sources of unearned income before receiving assistance.

Since 1997, individuals have been required to assign their maintenance rights to the Ministry as a condition of eligibility. As a free service to those families, the Ministry will obtain a

maintenance order and enroll the family in the Family Maintenance Enforcement Program, which is delivered by the Ministry of Justice and Attorney General. Those families continue to benefit from the order and free enforcement when they leave assistance.

The practice of deducting family maintenance income from income assistance and disability assistance has been part of BC's welfare regime since at least 1976.

BC family maintenance policy is generally consistent with other provinces, with two exceptions. Currently, Quebec allows a $100 per child monthly exemption on child support payments and Alberta's disability program allows a full exemption.

**B13 Fire & Police Services Collective Bargaining Act**

WHEREAS in resolution 2011-B3, UBCM requested the Minister of Labour review the impact of the Fire and Police Services Collective Bargaining Act (Act) on collective bargaining to determine if it had met its goals of facilitating collective bargaining as results were that the Act had not led to improved collective bargaining;

AND WHEREAS the Ministry of Labour, Citizens' Services and Open Government responded it had no plans at that time to undertake a review of the impact of the Act, however the Ministry would continue to actively monitor collective bargaining in the sectors covered by the Act:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM request the Ministry of Labour to agree at this time to review the impact of the Fire and Police Services Collective Bargaining Act on collective bargaining, as to date results are still indicative that the Act has not met its established goal.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training, and Minister Responsible for Labour**

The purpose of the *Fire and Police Services Collective Bargaining Act* (Act) is to provide access for unions and employers to binding interest arbitration to resolve a collective bargaining dispute. By proceeding to arbitration, the parties are able to maintain the ability to engage in face-to-face negotiations and avoid a strike or lockout which would interrupt the delivery of services critical to the protection of human life and property. The *Act* has achieved this objective.

It should be noted that the majority of municipalities and fire fighter union locals have reached voluntary settlements without resorting to arbitration under the Act. Where arbitration is utilized, the Act contains specific criteria to which an arbitrator must have regard in making his/her decision. These criteria are purposely broad and allow the parties to raise before the arbitrator the appropriate weight to be given to each of them.

The Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training, and Minister Responsible for Labour continues to have no plans to review the Act. The Ministry will, however, continue to actively monitor collective bargaining in the sectors covered by the Act.

**B14 ICBC Claims**

WHEREAS ICBC is no longer paying the full claims submitted by municipalities for vehicular damage done to municipal infrastructure;

AND WHEREAS if the actual expenses are not fully recovered, the remainder will be borne by the municipal tax payers:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM urge the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure to direct ICBC to reimburse the full costs of damages caused by their insured drivers.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure**

Any motorist who causes damage to property is responsible for certain costs under the law. As their insurance company, ICBC has a contractual obligation to the motorist to only pay for those costs the motorist is legally obligated to pay. In this regard, ICBC has not changed how it handles claims, including claims involving municipalities.

While there may be disagreements among the parties on what costs are recoverable from a motorist in a crash, ICBC continues to reimburse all reasonable costs of damages the at-fault motorist is responsible for under the law.

ICBC is prepared to look at any claim where a municipality feels they haven't been properly paid. If an agreement cannot be reached, the tort system in BC guarantees any party suffering a loss, including municipalities, the right to sue the responsible party in court to recover the damages. It is the courts who retain the ultimate authority to decide responsibility and award damages.

**B15 Road Rescue Services Funding to Communities or Societies**

WHEREAS many small communities and not-for-profit societies in BC provide road rescue services in large service areas outside the communities' jurisdictions;

AND WHEREAS while Emergency Management BC does provide reimbursements for some of the operational costs associated with the service, not all costs are recoverable, and none of the capital costs are covered, leaving the communities or the societies to subsidize the service as well as to pay for capital equipment at a large cost to the communities' taxpayers/societies:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the provincial government be asked to review how road rescue services are funded, particularly the capital costs for vehicles and equipment, and that the provincial government be asked to initiate a better funding arrangement for the operational expenses of the service and the larger capital costs associated with purchase of vehicles and equipment in order that smaller communities and societies can continue to provide this valuable service.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Justice**

In 2014 Emergency Management BC completed a review and update of the existing road rescue policies, which were consolidated and harmonized into a single policy for all service providers. In addition, the reimbursement rates intended to compensate for operational costs were re-evaluated and increased.

Emergency Management BC will be consulting with stakeholders, including UBCM and other responsible ministries, to review the funding issues related to capital replacement costs that are directly associated to out of jurisdiction road rescue services.

**B16 Direct Sharing of Proceeds of Crime**

WHEREAS some crimes perpetrated in communities have direct monetary and social effects on the communities in which the crimes occur;

AND WHEREAS, when confiscated, profits from various crimes and proceeds from associated forfeited property must all be remitted to the provincial government:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the provincial government once again be asked to consider expanding the legislation governing proceeds of crime to allow local governments to share directly in some of the proceeds from those crimes which have direct monetary and social impacts on communities.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Justice**

The Province of British Columbia created the *Civil Forfeiture Act* in 2005 to suppress illegal activity and take the profit motive out of crime. Under the legislation, property can be forfeited where it has been proven that property was acquired as a result of unlawful activity (proceeds) or was used for unlawful activity (instruments).

All property that is forfeited is sold and the proceeds are paid into the Civil Forfeiture account. The Civil Forfeiture Office is entirely self-funding and as such, it derives all its operating income from the forfeitures it obtains through successful settlements. The legislation also authorizes payments from this account for crime prevention initiatives and compensation to victims of crime such as fraud. Since 2006, the Province has disbursed $16 million in crime prevention grants to community organizations, policing agencies, First Nations bands, school boards and others throughout BC and directly to eligible victims of crime.

Under the *Criminal Asset Management Act*, which was passed in 2012, the Province consolidates funds from two sources of criminal forfeiture into one special account; these two separate sources of funding are:

1. Proceeds from the criminal forfeiture of assets derived from non-Federal offences; and
2. Proceeds received pursuant to a Memo of Understanding with the federal government which shares the proceeds of crime resulting from Federal offences, such as illegal drugs.

This Act is structured similar to the *Civil Forfeiture Act* with respect to the disbursement of funds, namely payments can be made for crime prevention initiatives and compensation to victims of crime. As this is a relatively new Act, there have been no disbursements from the account to date; however, it is envisioned that similar to the disbursement of Civil Forfeiture grants, a robust application and review process would be undertaken to identify and prioritize recipients.

**B17 Library Funding as a Dedicated Line Item**

WHEREAS resolution 2012-B71 'Reinstatement of Dedicated Line Item Library Funding in BC' was endorsed by the UBCM membership;

AND WHEREAS the inclusion of the provincial library budget in the overall budget for Ministry of Education programs continues to result in hardship and lack of security for BC's public libraries:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the UBCM re-affirm support for reinstating library funding as a separate line item in the provincial budget.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Finance**

Each ministry has a large number of individual programs which, for succinctness, must be presented in the Budget "Estimates" document at a high level. Generally, programs are grouped together under "sub-votes" and the annual amounts are reported out in that fashion.

The Ministry of Education has many programs within its comparatively large ministry operations budget vote of $5.3 billion that are not reported as specific line items but rather within sub-votes. For example, the $14M Public Libraries program is contained within the "Transfers to other Partners" sub-vote.

This presentation does not in any way impact the security of funding to BC public libraries. Government looks forward to continuing its constructive and mutually beneficial relationship with BC's public libraries.

**B18 Unconditional Grants**

WHEREAS many grants are very restrictive in their nature which limits the ability of local governments to use the money to service the best needs of their citizens and cause inappropriate allocation of scarce local resources:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that grant requirements be more flexible to allow for local governments to determine how the money would best be used to meet the needs of their population.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development**

The Province of British Columbia is committed to providing reasonable funding flexibility to ensure grant programs can be efficiently administered for the good of all British Columbians. For example, under the renewed Gas Tax Agreement, there is an expanded list of eligible project categories, giving local governments' greater flexibility in how they wish to use those funds.

In addition, the Province annually provides over $100 million in unconditional grant funding to local governments across British Columbia. Unconditional grants are highly flexible as there are few or no constraints on how the money is spent. They are primarily operating grants for good governance and service provision.

The Province places more restrictions on grants that are earmarked for specific high-priority infrastructure projects. Many of these projects are expensive, publicly scrutinized and relate to issues of public health and environmental quality. Thus, these projects require a high level of oversight to ensure they are planned and constructed in a timely and appropriate manner in accordance with the conditions of a specific grant agreement.

The Ministry is open to discussing more flexibility in grant programs. However, this must be done in the context of addressing competing concerns such as project transparency, accountability and cost efficiency.

**B19 Flexible Matching Grants**

WHEREAS most federal and provincial grant programs require from one-third to one-half matching funds in order to qualify for grant funding programs;
AND WHEREAS many local governments are struggling with overwhelming infrastructure needs and lack of adequate revenue to address those needs, including the amount of money required to match funds to apply for these grants:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM request the provincial and federal governments to provide other options for communities to take advantage of these grants including forgivable loans, the ability to pay the matching portion over a number of years, lower levels for matching (i.e. one-tenth for smaller local governments), and/or providing grants that do not require matching funding.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development**

The Province of British Columbia appreciates local governments' concerns about overwhelming infrastructure needs and the challenge with finding adequate financing mechanism to maintain appropriate levels of service.

The Province signed a renewed Gas Tax Agreement in May 2014, which will see $2.7 billion flow to local governments over the next 10 years. That is almost 3 times greater than the entire New Building Canada Fund allocation to BC. And under this agreement there is no requirement for matching funding, for either the direct allocation Community Works Fund or the pooled Strategic Priorities Fund.

The Province and federal government are placing a strong emphasis the need to improve infrastructure asset management practices across the board. Defining appropriate levels of service, willingness to pay and identifying manageable taxation rates and fees are critical to achieving financial sustainability.

The infrastructure deficit is so large that we have to take an incremental approach, addressing critical pieces one at a time. It is important to implement sound asset management practices that consider life-cycle costs including future capital replacement costs. Even if we addressed all of the infrastructure needs today, without sound management practices in place we will simply be faced with the same problem in a few years to come.

**B20 Protection of Small Community Grants**

WHEREAS local governments provide important and vital services to the residents of British Columbia;

AND WHEREAS small communities have come to rely on provincial revenues, in the form of 'Unconditional' or 'Small Community Protection' grants (also known as 'Community Strategic Investment' grants), in order to support their ability to provide such services to the residents of this province;

AND WHEREAS the Government of Canada has just recently recognized the true importance and value of strategic, predictable and long term investments in local government infrastructure to Canada:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM encourage the Government of British Columbia to commit to ensuring stable, predictable and sustainable funding for small communities in British Columbia to ensure adequate revenue resources for these communities to allow them to continue to provide essential infrastructure and local government services to the residents and businesses of their respective communities and to the Province of British Columbia as a whole.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development**

The Province of British Columbia understands the importance of the Small Community Grants (SCG) which help fund critical services in smaller communities. Thus, between 2005 and 2014, the Province has doubled the total annual SCG from $24 million to $48.5 million. The Province remains committed to the continuance of this program for the benefit of small communities throughout British Columbia.

**B21 Invasive Species – Quagga & Zebra Mussels**

WHEREAS aquatic invasive species pose a significant and growing threat to British Columbia's and Canada's freshwater and marine ecosystems with devastating consequences to multiple economic sectors in both BC and Canada;

AND WHEREAS Zebra and Quagga mussels in particular are an invasive species that if introduced into BC waters they are known to create toxic algae blooms, ruin beaches with sharp shells, destroy boat motors, foul water intakes and outfalls, put the ecology of the water at risk – including its fishery – and could cost the Okanagan alone more than $43 million a year just to manage;

AND WHEREAS Zebra and Quagga mussels have been found in thirty-three (33) states in the United States of America and are currently in the Great Lakes in Ontario and Quebec and in October, 2012 were found in Lake Winnipeg, Manitoba and there is as yet no proven method to eradicate the mussels once they are found in a body of water;

AND WHEREAS British Columbia has legislation in the Controlled Alien Species Regulations that provides fines and imprisonment for possession, breeding, transporting, releasing or allowing to be released or escape into BC waters but has no inspection stations to check or decontaminate boats and trailers that might be carrying these mussels; and since it is the jurisdiction of the federal government to regulate or ban the importation of these mussels and it does not currently have regulations in place to make it possible for Canadian Border Services Agency staff to inspect or stop contaminated boats from entering Canada from the United States:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM call upon the provincial government to provide the Ministry of Environment additional and sufficient financial and human resources to undertake boat inspections at interprovincial points of entry and within the province;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that UBCM call upon the provincial government to urge the federal government to pass its pending regulations under the federal Fisheries Act to prevent the introduction of aquatic invasive species into Canadian waters and to control and manage their establishment and spread once introduced, as soon as possible and that the provincial government offer its cooperation to partner with CBSA to ensure appropriate inspection and enforcement at international border crossings in the province.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Environment**

The Province of British Columbia has conducted pilot boat inspection programs in south eastern BC in collaboration with local stewardship groups, to increase the awareness of boaters around the new provincial regulations and test the procedures in place for enforcement staff.

The Province has provided training to provincial and federal enforcement staff around BC's ban on live and dead Zebra and Quagga mussels, including CBSA officers and Fisheries Officers.

The Department of Fisheries and Oceans has completed the draft of their Aquatic Invasive Species regulation and plans to have it to go to Gazette 1 in December, 2014. The Province has raised the need for this legislation to be implemented as recently as August 19, 2014, on the Canadian Council of Fisheries and Aquaculture Deputy Minister's Call.

For 2014, the Province will have more than tripled the amount of Zebra and Quagga mussel monitoring.

The Province is working with the western provinces by closely coordinating programs that span across provincial boundaries to reduce the risk of mussel introduction.

**B22 Japanese Knotweed Management Plan**

WHEREAS Japanese Knotweed is an invasive plant which is spread by both cutting and digging and is therefore proliferating at an alarming rate on public roadways;

AND WHEREAS Japanese Knotweed causes erosion, damages infrastructure and compromises motorist and cyclist visibility;

AND WHEREAS local governments lack the jurisdiction and resources to manage invasive species on Crown land and provincial road right-of-ways:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT UBCM work with the Ministry of Environment and Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure to recognize the emergency nature of this invasive plant and adequately plan for and resource its removal from provincial roadways.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations**

Invasive knotweeds are currently the Ministry of Forest, Land and Natural Resource Operations' highest priority with respect to invasive plant management. We provided $76,000 in 2013 and $89,500 in 2014 to the Coastal Invasive Species Committee for the treatment of invasive plants, with the majority of funding directed towards the management of knotweed. Furthermore, the Ministry implemented an effective signage program in 2011 to indicate where knotweed and other invasive plants are present in order to prevent accidental mowing or disturbance of the site by maintenance contractors before treatments can be completed.

The Inter-Ministry Invasive Species Working Group, which includes representation from the Ministries of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations; Transportation and Infrastructure; and Environment (BC Parks), recognizes the significant threat posed by Japanese knotweed and has identified knotweed as one of the highest-priority invasive plant species for control efforts on Crown land.

Provincial agencies work collaboratively with regional invasive plant committees, the Invasive Species Council of British Columbia, the Inter-Ministry Invasive Species Working Group and individual regional districts and municipalities to address invasive plant issues in specific geographic areas throughout the province. In addition, the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure recognizes the threat of invasive knotweed species and has allotted the majority of available funding over the past several years towards chemical treatment of knotweed along highways and in gravel pits.

**B23 Derelict Vessels**

WHEREAS in 2012 UBCM endorsed a resolution to call upon the federal and provincial governments to implement a derelict vessel removal program modelled after the Washington State program and to designate the Canadian Coast Guard as the receiver of wrecked vessels in the case of every abandoned or derelict vessel in the waters of coastal British Columbia;

AND WHEREAS the District of Squamish and other coastal communities continue to have issues with derelict vessels that are causing harm to the coastal marine environment:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Union of British Columbia Municipalities strongly encourage the federal and provincial governments to immediately implement a derelict vessel removal program modeled after the Washington State program, and to designate the Canadian Coast Guard as the receiver of wrecked vessels in the case of every abandoned or derelict vessel in the waters of coastal British Columbia.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations**

Dealing with unauthorized float homes, abandoned vessels and derelict structures near public waterways is a complex, time-consuming and costly process that often involves multiple agencies and levels of government. Government does not have the authority to make the kind of regulatory changes sought by this resolution.

Federal authorities are the lead agency regarding structures or vessels that obstruct maritime navigation or pose a threat to spawning beds or the environment. When a vessel runs aground or sinks on provincial Crown land, federal authorities remain the lead agency. If the structure in question is not recognized as a vessel, then Government has jurisdiction to act. Often, provincial and federal agencies work together to deal with abandoned vessels on a priority basis, beginning with those that pose an immediate threat to navigation, safety or the environment.

Government has worked with other stakeholders on a paper clarifying the roles of federal, provincial and local authorities in addressing abandoned structures and derelict vessels. This will help agencies encountering challenges with derelict vessels to determine an appropriate response. The paper is publicly available on the Ministry's website at http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/land_tenures/derelict_vessels.html.

**B24 Multi-Material BC**

WHEREAS stakeholders have indicated issues have not been resolved with Multi-Material BC implementation;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM request the Province ensure full and robust consultation in the implementation of Multi-Material BC to ensure financial fairness to our constituents and maximize diversion rates.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Environment**

The Ministry of Environment (Ministry) is supportive of the request for additional consultation and dialogue regarding Multi-Material BC's (MMBC) implementation of its stewardship plan for Packaging and Printed Paper (PPP) and is very aware of some of the financial and service delivery inequities that are emerging.

Although the intent of the Recycling Regulation and various performance measures set out in MMBC's approved stewardship plan are designed to ensure all sectors are properly serviced without discrimination to geographic location, types of existing services, or related costs, this has not been the case for several jurisdictions to date due to a variety of reasons.

Extensive consultation on the regulation and proposed MMBC plan has spanned several years, numerous working groups (including the UBCM Recycling Negotiating Committee) and committees and was undertaken in venues around the province. However, now that implementation is underway, continued dialogue and input is needed.

Put in context, this is the largest and most complex Extended Producer Responsibility program in the history of BC and is still very much in its infancy. And although some 170 collection agreements are in place with local governments and other collectors across the province, these financial and service delivery inequities with specific jurisdictions do justify greater attention. Therefore, the Ministry has allocated additional staff and resources towards assisting both MMBC and various local governments with revisiting outstanding issues and finding common ground onto which we can collectively finish building the comprehensive program envisioned.

## B25 Environmental Assessment Review Process

WHEREAS the guiding principles of the BC Environmental Assessment Office (EAO) include a commitment to undertaking objective environmental assessments, giving full and fair consideration to all interests, and to providing opportunities for all interested parties to participate in the environmental assessment process;

AND WHEREAS the allocated 30-day public consultation period is not adequate for meaningful public consideration and comment on projects under review, nor does it provide opportunities for public comment on the EAO's report before a Ministerial decision is made public:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM urge the provincial government to revise the Environmental Assessment Process to increase opportunities for public engagement by providing a longer public consultation period and by making the EAO's report available for public comment prior to announcing the Ministerial decision.

**RESPONSE: Environmental Assessment Office**

The Environmental Assessment Office (EAO) manages the assessment of proposed major projects in British Columbia in accordance with the requirements of the Environmental Assessment Act. EAO is guided by the principle of fairness and undertakes objective environmental assessments, giving full and fair consideration to all interests, including the public who may be affected by a proposed project and other interested parties.

EAO typically consults with the public at two key points – early in the process on the issues and values that should be studied prior to a proponent filing an application and again on the completed application that is submitted to EAO for review. The Public Consultation Policy Regulation requires a public comment period on an application of no less than 30 days, but in many instances a public comment period lasts longer. The information provided by EAO to ministers at the conclusion of an environmental assessment is made publicly available at the time of decision, including a summary of public concerns that were identified during the assessment, along with any other materials required by ministers for their decision.

EAO believes that the Act and Regulation are sufficiently flexible to tailor public engagement requirements and timing to the circumstances of each project and the needs and interests of those who may be affected by a proposed project. In addition to EAO public comment periods, EAO requires that proponents conduct a public consultation program. These programs are specific to the projects, the local context and the interests of stakeholders. They are approved by EAO and EAO evaluates the results for effectiveness. As well, local governments that are members of EAO technical working group are invited to provide advice on potential impacts and mitigation measures throughout the environmental assessment.

EAO believes that public and stakeholder input is important for increasing understanding of proposed projects and the environmental assessment process and provides opportunities for the public to share information and perspectives that can help inform the final decision.

EAO staff met with the UBCM Environment Committee on July 17, 2014, to provide an update on the EAO review identified in the 2014/15 Mandate Letter for the Minister of Environment. As part of that update, EAO advised that they are in the early stages of reviewing the public consultation approach, with a view to: understanding perspectives on public consultation in

environmental assessments; clarifying the purposes and approach to public engagement; and implementing improvements to the consultation process.

EAO will be sharing its approach in a consultation paper by Spring 2015 and will seek the views of UBCM members, other stakeholders and the public at that time.

**B26 Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

WHEREAS a lack of funding has made it increasingly difficult for local governments to meet targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs);

AND WHEREAS provincial and federal governments appear to be withdrawing from their commitment to reduce CO2 and CH4 emissions on a national scale:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM request that provincial and federal governments renew their commitment to meeting GHG reduction targets;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that renewed funding be provided to local governments to ensure that climate action plans and projects continue to be implemented.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development**

The Province acknowledges the significant role that BC local governments play in helping to reduce province-wide GHG emissions and recognizes the continued leadership and commitment of BC local governments in taking action on climate change.

To maximize opportunities to reduce GHG emissions, the Province has passed significant climate action related legislation since 2007, including:

- The *Carbon Tax Act that* puts a price on greenhouse gas emissions providing an incentive for sustainable choices that produce fewer emissions.
- The *Greenhouse Gas Reduction Targets Act,* requiring the provincial government and schools, colleges, universities, health authorities and Crown Corporations to become carbon neutral and setting provincial GHG reduction targets of 33 percent below 2007 levels by 2020 and 80 percent below 2007 levels by 2050.
- *The Greenhouse Gas Reduction (Vehicle Emissions Standards) Act,* to enable the adoption of vehicle emission standards to increase automobile efficiency. Note that this Act was not brought into force, as the federal government implemented similar, national level legislation.
- The *Greenhouse Gas Reduction (Emissions Standards) Statutes Amendment Act* focuses on reducing greenhouse gas emissions from certain industrial operations such as waste management operations and the regulation of landfill gas. The Act also enables regulation that requires thermal electricity generated emissions to be offset and all coal-based electricity emissions to be stored or sequestered.
- The *Greenhouse Gas Reduction (Renewable and Low Carbon Fuel Requirements) Act*, to encourage the development of renewable forms of energy and decrease the carbon content of fuels.
- The *Local Governments (Green Communities) Statutes Amendment Act*, to require local governments to establish GHG reduction targets, policies and actions and encourage the development of complete, compact and energy efficient communities.

The renewed Federal Gas Tax Fund has been made permanent in federal legislation and will result in approximately $2.7 billion dollars flowing to BC local governments over the next 10 years for infrastructure and capacity building. In addition, the New Building Canada Fund will result in approximately $1.09 billion in funding to support provincial, regional and local infrastructure projects over the next 10 years. Under both programs, projects are encouraged to consider the impacts of climate change and seek innovative solutions and promote sustainable development.

The Climate Action Revenue Incentive Program (CARIP), a conditional grant program, is also available to local governments that have signed onto the *BC Climate Action Charter*. Since 2008 the Program has provided $19 million to support BC local governments in taking action on climate change.

The Province continues to work with federal and local governments to ensure the right mix of tools, incentives and other supports are in place to assist local governments in achieving their climate action targets and goals.

**B27 Implementation of Nearly Net-zero Building Regulations**

WHEREAS the Province of British Columbia has signed the Pacific Coast Action Plan on Climate Change and Energy, committing to "Transform the market for energy efficiency and lead the way to "net-zero" buildings;

AND WHEREAS communities in British Columbia have set climate action targets in order to comply with Climate Action Charter requirements that will require significant gains from the building sector in terms of greenhouse gas emissions targets and are now developing a broad suite of mechanisms to achieve high levels of building energy performance;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Province of British Columbia draft a plan to get to "Nearly Net-Zero" buildings with an implementation timeline, suggested incremental improvements to the BC Building Code and an opt-in regulation for local governments.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Natural Gas Development and Minister Responsible for Housing**

The Province of British Columbia has long been a leader and national advocate for improved energy efficiency standards. In 2013, BC was the first jurisdiction in Canada to adopt the new National Energy Code for Buildings and the National Building Code Energy Efficiency requirements for housing and small buildings.

We are committed to improvement and ensuring that the construction sector can continue with ongoing improvements so that future changes do not jeopardize affordability. Education and incentives are important factors for the construction sector and this is ongoing work.

The Energy Efficiency Branch in the Ministry of Energy and Mines has been working on a roadmap design for new construction in the Province. As well, BC was a part of the Pacific Northwest Economic Regional Executive in July 2014, where it endorsed the goal to develop a net-zero/building regulation to help improve the performance of existing buildings.

**B28 Provincial Energy Efficiency Programs**

WHEREAS the Government of BC has discontinued the successful LiveSmart BC residential efficiency incentive program, shifting support to product based incentives offered through major utilities;

AND WHEREAS this program shift results in the loss of funding for comprehensive actions recommended through home energy assessments, and a reduced understanding of the overall energy performance of a home:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM request the Province ensure incentives remain available for comprehensive actions to address overall residential energy efficiency, including incentives for home energy assessments and post-retrofit evaluations.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Energy and Mines**

The Home Energy Rebate Offer (HERO) was launched in 2014 by BC Hydro and FortisBC to help homeowners reduce their energy bills and improve the comfort of their homes through energy retrofits.

Under HERO, a pre and post retro fit EnerGuide home evaluation is required to access the $750 Bonus Offer where participants can implement three or more eligible measures and receive $750 in rebates and is also required to access the up to $500 in rebates for draft proofing measures.

The Ministry is encouraging expanded use of energy evaluations and facilitating discussion with Natural Resources Canada on adoption of their new Home Energy Rating system utilizing the existing certified energy advisor network.

In the current fiscal plan, the Ministry does not have a budget allocation to re-enter the market with a government incentive program. The Ministry does, however, work closely with utilities on program design to optimize their incentive offerings.

**B29 Agriculture Funding in BC**

WHEREAS provincial funding for agriculture in British Columbia as a percentage of agriculture Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is the lowest in Canada;

AND WHEREAS it is imperative that BC farmers obtain the financial support necessary to sustain their industry;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM request the provincial government raise agriculture funding in British Columbia to the national average.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Agriculture**

*BC Agrifoods, A Strategy for Growth*, focuses on job creation and economic development, recognizing the Province's competitive advantage as a trusted producer of high-quality foods, beverages and increasingly high-value niche-market products. The industry growth objectives are continually being updated. For example, the Minister of Agriculture established a British Columbia Minister's Agrifood Advisory Committee in Marhc 2014 to recommend priorities and provide strategic advice on how to grow a strong agrifood economy and create sustainable jobs for British Columbians in the agriculture, fisheries and food sector.

Through the Growing Forward 2 Program, the governments of Canada and British Columbia have committed a total of $13.4 million to industry between 2013 and 2018 through the Canada-BC Agri-Innovation Program. In 2013-14, 36 projects have shared more than $3.3 million in funding.

The projects announced include:

- Commercializing a system that uses dry processing technology to create food products from BC fruits and vegetables not sold as fresh or frozen products.
- The development of a specialized transfer tool to improve the success rate and accessibility of embryo transfers for commercial cattle operations and other agricultural applications.
- Field testing several new bio-herbicides for weed control in cranberries.

Projects funded through the program must have the potential to lead to the commercialization and/or adoption of innovative products, technologies and practices.

Other achievements include: the creation of the new Agriculture Centre of Excellence at the University of Fraser Valley; implementation of a new meat inspection system in British Columbia; implementation of the carbon tax exemption for greenhouse growers, nursery and forest seedling sectors and on coloured fuels, for the other members of the farming community; and, numerous trade related events to encourage the overseas sales of BC Agrifood products as committed in the Strategy for Growth.

**B30 Liquefied Natural Gas Projects**

WHEREAS the Province is actively supporting the development of liquefied natural gas (LNG) as British Columbia's future economic driver;

AND WHEREAS multiple proposals and applications for LNG and other large scale industrial projects are creating a drain on the limited resources of many small communities and regional districts:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM urge the provincial government to develop an LNG plan to provide immediate and meaningful assistance to local governments in British Columbia to address the issue.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development**

Government is interested in supporting local governments and local government elected officials facing capacity challenges presented by responding to and preparing for major industrial development.

In 2014, the Ministry initiated the Northwest Community Readiness initiative to support those communities facing capacity challenges due to proposed major industrial projects in their region. This initiative involved:

- providing five planning interns to local governments to provide planning support;
- providing a community liaison officer position at Northern Development Initiative Trust offices to assist with review of proponent referrals;
- establishing a $500,000 Community Land Use Planning Program to fund official community plan, and bylaw updates and other planning projects;
- establishing a $500,000 Asset Management Capacity Building initiative to provide state of the art training and support for local government asset inventory and supplemental planning capacity;
- providing a dedicated Executive Director to facilitate and assist with inter-ministry issues; and,
- partnering to fund a Housing Strategy for the communities of Kitimat, Terrace, Prince Rupert and Port Edward.

As it monitors the implications of the industrial growth, the Ministry is committed to continuing to work with UBCM and local governments to identify what further responses in support of local governments may be appropriate.

**B31 Trades & Technology Skills Training**

WHEREAS there is expected to be a significant growth in job opportunities in British Columbia in the next decade, with a specific demand for trades and technology occupations;

AND WHEREAS the provincial government has implemented a 10-year action plan for skills training for youth and older workers seeking to retrain;

AND WHEREAS the 2014 provincial budget included no additional funding for skills training:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the provincial government be requested to provide a funding commitment to enhance and improve training facilities and expand opportunities for youth training in trades and technology.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training, and Minister Responsible for Labour**

The Government of British Columbia is working with our partners in education and industry to make sure our education and training programs are aligned with demands of our future labour market. Government currently invests almost $7.6 billion each year in education and training. Re-engineering our system doesn't mean spending more, it means targeting more of the substantial resources already available to meet labour market priorities.

Through the Skills for Jobs Blueprint government is making the most effective use of existing resources and future investments and encouraging more students to choose training that leads to high demand jobs and to consider relocating to parts of B.C. where work and training are readily available.

By 2017/2018, 25 per cent of provincial operating grants to public post-secondary institutions ($270 million) will be aligned to training that matches with high demand occupations and jobs. The expanded BC Access Grant makes trades training more accessible for students in financial need, offering eligible students up to $16,400 in non-repayable funding to study in-demand foundation trades programs.

In 2014, government invested $6.8 million to fund an additional 1,424 critical trades seats at 14 public post-secondary institutions around B.C. In 2015, these new seats will be coming online, making it even easier for individuals to get the training for in-demand jobs.

The Ministries of Education and Advanced Education have budgeted $585M in capital expenditures in 2014/15 alone. Through the Blueprint, $185M is being directed over three years toward trades training infrastructure and equipment, with construction already underway on two new multi-million trades training facilities on Vancouver Island and in the Okanagan to ensure students are learning these new skills on up-to-date equipment.

New resources like Find Your Fit and updated WorkBC.ca tools are getting more British Columbians, particularly youth, interested and aware of in-demand occupations like the skilled trades and efforts to double the number of ACE-IT seats will help students get training, experience and credits before they graduate high school. As well, through the Canada – BC Job Fund, $65 million is going annually, over the next six years, to leverage employer investments in training and to increase the workforce participation of underrepresented groups.

**B32 Geothermal Power**

WHEREAS geothermal power has the potential to supply clean and sustainable power and heat, reduce the cost of power transmission for BC Hydro, strengthen the power grid by supplying consistent baseload power without transmission line outages and increase the standard of living in remote communities;

AND WHEREAS electricity required for new industries, including proposed pipelines, require firm baseload power resulting in greater loads on the existing transmission system; possibly requiring new diesel generation even as renewable power options are being dismissed;
AND WHEREAS BC Hydro has removed geothermal power production from its latest Integrated Resource Plan while every other developed nation on the Pacific Ring of Fire uses geothermal to generate electricity;

AND WHEREAS inadequacies in the province's geothermal permitting and leasing process have failed to produce a single operating geothermal power plant:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the provincial government support development of geothermal power in British Columbia, by addressing deficiencies in the province's geothermal permitting and leasing process, by encouraging GeoScienceBC to survey provincial heat resources, by including geothermal as a resource option in BC Hydro's Integrated Resource Plan, and by working with BC Hydro to facilitate interconnection and a payment structure that promotes geothermal power.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Energy and Mines**

The Province of British Columbia has held several geothermal permit dispositions over the past several years resulting in 12 permits being released to developers in various locations across the province.

The Ministry of Energy and Mines is working on streamlining the regulatory framework for geothermal exploration through amendments to the *Geothermal Resources Act*.

Geoscience BC has begun work through the TREK (Targeting Resources for Exploration and Knowledge) Project, initiated in 2013, to evaluate geothermal resources for communities in British Columbia's northern interior plateau region.

Under BC Hydro's Standing Offer Program, geothermal proponents can sell power to BC Hydro. Identification of a geothermal resource requires drilling, without a guarantee of success. There is a high chance of failure as it is very difficult to pinpoint where the resource is. For example, from 2004-2008, Western Geopower spent approximately $32 million on exploration at Meagre Creek, without success.

Under the current structure of the electricity sector in BC, it is up to the private sector to identify and develop geothermal prospects. Given the risks, we believe the private sector is better positioned to develop geothermal resources and that ratepayers should not take on this risk.

**B33 Anti-idling**

WHEREAS vehicle emissions create a public health risk of chronic diseases including cancer as well as cardiovascular and respiratory diseases;

AND WHEREAS Idle Free BC supports efforts to reduce unnecessary vehicle idling;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM request the provincial government to increase the focus on health risks in the Idle Free BC initiative and to increase efforts to raise public awareness of this campaign.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Environment**

Over the past six years, as part of the Province's sustainable environmental management, Air Action Plan and climate action directives, BC has actively addressed vehicle idling through several initiatives, including school programs such as HASTe (Hub for Active School Travel and Emissions), idle-free signage, public education campaigns in nine communities and public service toolkits and pledges. Other organizations have also contributed to idle-reduction through a range of policies, bylaws, fleet training programs, workshops and procurement policies.

In 2013, the Ministry of Environment commissioned an evaluation of idle-reduction programs delivered to date around the province, to help define the need and specific targets for further idle reduction work and provide recommendations for the most effective initiatives to support future endeavors. The report findings are currently being considered.

The Province is also supporting further research on the health effects of vehicle emissions. In 2012 a steering committee of provincial, regional, municipal and health agencies contracted a study to look at Traffic Related Air Pollution (TRAP) exposure mitigation strategies and the roles and opportunities for provincial and local agencies to implement the recommendations. The consultant assessed over 100 strategies in terms of effectiveness at reducing exposure, feasibility and potential to achieve co-benefits. The consultant report was finalized in March, 2013, and was shared with Metro Vancouver's Environment and Parks Committee in September. The steering committee has reviewed and prioritized the recommendations and work to implement strategies for reducing exposure to transportation emissions is ongoing.

**B34 Concurrent Disorders & Chronic Offenders**

WHEREAS many chronic offenders suffer from both mental health and addiction issues (concurrent disorders);

AND WHEREAS the corrections system is not equipped to deal with people who have concurrent disorders which result in criminal activity;

AND WHEREAS chronic offenders suffering from concurrent disorders are repeatedly involved with the criminal justice system with little or no chance of rehabilitation:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the provincial government be requested to develop a long-term, multi-faceted strategy to help people suffering from concurrent disorders to avoid becoming chronic offenders, including integrated health and psychiatric care, criminal justice reform, and access to affordable housing.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Health**

The Province of British Columbia has made it a priority to build a comprehensive system of mental health and substance use (MHSU) services throughout the province, making record investments totaling $1.3 billion annually.

The Ministry of Health (Ministry), health authorities and the Ministry of Justice are committed to addressing the needs of individuals with MHSU problems in contact with the justice system through a collaborative and integrated response. BC Corrections attempts to link offenders to community MHSU resources and has partnered in a number of integration projects.

The Ministry has partnered with health authorities and the Ministry of Justice, Policing and Security Branch, to develop overarching guidelines for a provincial protocol for police agencies and MHSU services on their respective roles and responsibilities to provide an effective, resource-efficient and integrated response to the needs of people with MHSU problems who come into contact with police. In addition, the project will identify challenges and mitigation strategies to better support an individual with a MHSU problem when arrested and charged with a criminal offense.

Additionally, Healthy Minds, Healthy People: A 10 Year Plan to Address MHSU in BC includes an action to develop guidelines, service protocols and tools to ensure that adults with a mental illness and/or problematic substance use, who are in contact with the criminal justice system, have access to appropriate transition and support services.

**B35 Regional Hospital District Capital Funding**

WHEREAS provincial funding for capital equipment and projects for hospitals and health facilities has been on decline despite urgent needs for facility upgrades and equipment repairs; AND WHEREAS Regional Hospital Districts and local tax payers cannot be expected to increase their funding contributions to address critical gap;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the provincial government properly fund the operating and equipping of hospitals and health facilities in British Columbia.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Health**

Since 2001, the health sector has invested more than $9.1 billion on health capital projects to expand, modernize and upgrade hospitals and health care facilities across British Columbia. Over the next three years, BC's health care system will benefit from investments such as new medical equipment and modernized health facilities as part of a $2.9 billion health sector capital plan.

To support health authorities in using health care dollars most efficiently and with maximum flexibility, the Province implemented a multi-year capital budgeting system and a capital policy framework that encourages more innovative solutions to meeting capital needs (e.g., public private partnerships; residential care service agreements).

As there is not an unlimited supply of capital funding, health authorities and the Ministry of Health must prioritize capital requests to ensure funds are directed to the facilities with the greatest need. While all health facilities regularly require replacement of medical equipment, no health facility in BC goes unequipped.

We will continue to invest in frontline care. Health authorities are expected to receive an operating funding increase of approximately eight percent over the next three years. Health authorities continue to spend approximately 60 percent of their total annual expenditures in the acute care sector.

**B36 Insurance Corporation of British Columbia & Fire Insurance**

WHERAS the Union of BC Municipalities endorsed resolution 2013-B141 – a resolution to allow the Insurance Corporation of BC to issue house insurance;

AND WHEREAS there is a need to progress quickly with implementation of the resolution:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM urge the Province to allow ICBC to offer house insurance and to implement as soon as possible.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure**

The Government of British Columbia supports the role of the Insurance Corporation of British Columbia (ICBC) in providing basic compulsory auto insurance coverage to all motorists in British Columbia. Government has no plans to have ICBC operating in any insurance markets other than automobile insurance. Any concerns about the operations of private sector property insurance companies could be brought to an organization such as the Insurance Council of BC, whose mandate is to provide a level of protection to the public pertaining to the sale of insurance products and services under the framework provided by the *Insurance Act*.

**B37 inter-Governmental Communication**

WHEREAS effective local government decision-making requires substantial knowledge of provincial plans and activities;

AND WHEREAS local governments sometimes encounter difficulties acquiring this knowledge from provincial ministries therefore being required to use methods such as Freedom of Information requests:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM urge the provincial government to review its communication policy and procedures with a view to fostering a timelier and more cooperative partnership with local governments.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development**

The Province of British Columbia's view is that consultation with local governments is a key principle of local-provincial relations.

The provincial responsibility to consult is laid out in the two key local government statutes, the *Community Charter* and *Local Government Act*. Of particular note is section 276 of the *Community Charter*, which identifies areas of provincial legislation and policy for which the Minister responsible must consult with local governments through UBCM.

**B38 Domestic Natural Gas Supply**

WHEREAS the singular energy policy direction of the Province of British Columbia is to export natural gas in significant volumes;

AND WHEREAS Australia has already focused on the export of natural gas to the detriment of their domestic, business, manufacturing and institutional communities:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Premier develop priority policies to ensure that the domestic supply for citizens, business, manufacturing and institutional needs will remain readily accessible and priced to be affordable.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Natural Gas Development and Minister Responsible for Housing**

British Columbia produces more natural gas than it consumes and in 2013, BC only used 14 percent of its natural gas. The province has enough natural gas resources (estimated to be about 2,933 trillion cubic feet) to meet domestic and global energy demands. If only 20 percent of this resource were recovered, it would be enough to support operations for more than 150 years.

Natural gas will continue to be an important fuel for British Columbians, heating homes, powering industry and fuelling vehicles with fewer emissions than gasoline or diesel.

The Province does not set natural gas prices; price is determined by the marketplace. Based on supply and demand, where there is an increased supply of a commodity in the market, it usually results in lower prices.

**B39 $10/day Child Care**

WHEREAS the current lack of adequate, qualified and affordable daycare for working families in BC is hindering economic growth, job opportunities for workers and a child's well-being;

AND WHEREAS in 2012 the Union of BC Municipalities endorsed the Community Plan for a Public System of Integrated Early Care and Learning in BC which provides a framework for early childhood services so that children, families, communities and our economy are served by a high quality, universal, democratic and accountable system of early care and learning:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM advocate the Province of BC for the implementation of the Community Plan for a Public System of Integrated Early Care and Learning and call for action to begin steps toward implementing a $10/Day Childcare Program for BC.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Children and Family Development**

The Ministry of Children and Family Development is unable to endorse a $10 a day child care plan. The estimated $1.5 billion investment required to implement this model province-wide is cost prohibitive, given the current economic environment in BC.

The $1.5 billion funding estimate actually represents a minimum implementation cost. The proposed model only includes children from birth to age six and does not take into account unlicensed child care. Given that the Province currently supports child care for children up to age 12 in both licensed and unlicensed child care settings, implementing the model would actually require funding well beyond the $1.5 billion level.

The Ministry supports other components of the Community Plan for a Public System of Integrated Early Care and Learning BC, including the need for better integration across child care, early childhood development and early learning services. The BC Early Years Strategy emphasizes a one government approach to addressing the need for increased access, affordability and quality of early years programs and services, including child care. In February 2014, government established the Provincial Office for the Early Years to ensure that early years activities and initiatives in BC are well-coordinated and accessible in communities across the province.

The BC Early Years Strategy also focuses on improving the quality of early childhood development and child care programs and services. Key strategies include: implementing a network of Early Years Centres that will provide up-to-date information and core services to parents; introducing a provincial child care registry to better support parents seeking access to child care; and launching the Child Care Major Capital Program to support the creation of 13,000 new spaces throughout the province over the next eight years.

**B40 Child Poverty**

WHEREAS British Columbia has the highest child poverty rate in Canada, with one in five children living in poverty;

AND WHEREAS British Columbia's child poverty rate has been higher than the Canadian average since 1999, and the highest of all provinces most years in the last decade:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the provincial government be requested to adopt a comprehensive poverty reduction plan with legislated targets and timelines, and a goal to eradicate child poverty in British Columbia by 2020.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Children and Family Development**

No government wants to see any child or family living in poverty and we are committed to working collaboratively across the ministries, non-governmental organizations and communities to find innovative ways for addressing poverty.

Addressing the issue of poverty means getting to the root causes of why people cannot make ends meet and that actions are what make a real difference for families. *This government is addressing poverty by* 1) growing the economy and creating jobs through the BC Jobs Plan; and 2) targeting supports to the individuals and families who need them.

British Columbia has already implemented many of the changes called for by formalized poverty plans in other jurisdictions, including increasing the minimum wage, creating affordable housing and eliminating or reducing MSP premiums for low-income families.

Through a partnership with UBCM's Healthy Communities Committee, we are working with seven communities to create locally-developed poverty action plans that are complemented by the targeted supports and services we are providing at a provincial level. When the projects launched in May 2012, UBCM recommended the participating communities - Cranbrook, Kamloops, New Westminster, Port Hardy, Prince George, Stewart and Surrey - reflect a mix of BC's metro, urban, rural and remote communities. On May 13, 2014, the BC government and UBCM released a report highlighting the progress of the pilot projects and next steps.

Acting as a poverty liaison, Fraser-Nicola MLA, Jackie Tegart, is visiting each pilot community and work with all levels of government and community organizations to move these plans forward. The success of these projects is dependent on the partnerships between the provincial and local governments, community organizations, service providers and business representatives.

Poverty is everyone's responsibility and we all have a significant role to play in reducing poverty across BC.

**B41 Poverty Reduction**

WHEREAS the Province of British Columbia is one of only two provinces in all of Canada that does not have a Poverty Reduction Plan;

AND WHEREAS there is a need for such a plan to help support those who suffer from poverty in our province, in particular children and seniors:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM request the provincial government to create and implement a Poverty Reduction Plan, as well as set aside the resources to support this plan.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Children and Family Development Response:**

No government wants to see any child or family living in poverty and we are committed to working collaboratively across the ministries, non-governmental organizations and communities to find innovative ways for addressing poverty.

Addressing the issue of poverty means getting to the root causes of why people cannot make ends meet and that actions are what make a real difference for families. This government is addressing poverty by 1) growing the economy and creating jobs through the BC Jobs Plan; and 2) targeting supports to the individuals and families who need them.

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Poverty is everyone's responsibility and we all have a significant role to play in reducing poverty across British Columbia.

**B42 Rental Subsidies for Low Income Households**

WHEREAS the District of Kitimat is concerned that the current economy has resulted in high rental rates and has affected the ability of residents on low and fixed incomes to acquire housing in Kitimat and throughout the region;

AND WHEREAS access to safe, affordable housing is a requirement to create healthy communities:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM call on the provincial government to increase BC Housing rental subsidies for low-income households in communities affected by industrial development.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Natural Gas Development and Minister Responsible for Housing**

The Province of British Columbia is working with northern communities to help them manage the economic development and growth that will occur over the next few years. We are in the early stages and housing is a key priority in our discussions.

The Province is supporting Kitimat, as well as Port Edward, Prince Rupert and Terrace, to develop Housing Action Plans. These will help to identify specific actions that can be taken by all levels of government and other stakeholders to address expected housing needs over the longer term.

The Province is working to expand the new Homeless Prevention Program to northern communities. First announced in October 2014, the program provides rent supplements and support services to those at risk of homelessness. The Province and the federal government are investing $62.5 million over five years to help prevent homelessness.

To help increase affordable housing options for low-income seniors and families living in the private market, the Province is investing an additional $12.5 million annually to enhance our rental assistance programs, the Shelter Aid for Elderly Renters (SAFER) program and Rental Assistance Program (RAP). On average, families will see an extra $40 per month; the average increase for seniors will be about $34 per month.

Last year, the Province invested about $400 million to provide affordable housing for more than 100,000 BC households. In the northern region, there is close to $32 million invested each year to help more than 4,900 low-income households.

**B43 Affordable Housing**

WHEREAS the lack of affordable and/or co-operative housing in northern communities is having a deleterious effect on local economies and the quality of life for many British Columbians;

AND WHEREAS affordable housing is essential to support vibrant and healthy communities, and will continue to be required:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM advocate to the provincial government to increase the number of new affordable housing units constructed in British Columbia as soon as possible.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Natural Gas Development and Minister Responsible for Housing**

Last year, the Province of British Columbia invested about $400 million to provide affordable housing for more than 100,000 BC households. In the northern region, the provincial government provided more than $32 million to help more than 4,900 low-income households.

In September 2014 the Province, in partnership with the federal government, officially opened Victoria Towers in Prince George, creating 91 affordable rental housing for low to moderate income families, seniors and people with disabilities.

To help increase affordable housing options for low-income seniors and families living in the private market, the Province is focusing on enhancing its rental assistance programs (see Resolution B42). Last year in the north, 300 families and 600 seniors households received rental assistance to help keep their housing affordable.

The Province is supporting Kitimat, as well as Port Edward, Prince Rupert and Terrace, to develop Housing Action Plans. These will help to identify specific actions that can be taken by all levels of government and other stakeholders to address expected housing needs over the longer term.

## B44 Rental Assistance for Housing Cooperatives

WHEREAS non-profit cooperative housing provides valuable mixed income housing for a range of households, with low-income cooperative members benefiting from rent subsidies geared to income assistance;

AND WHEREAS in the next twenty years operating agreements with over 180 cooperative housing providers will expire, affecting almost 11,000 units in Metro Vancouver and more than 14,500 units across the province; in the short term, by 2017, rent-geared-to-income subsidies for low-income members will cease for one-quarter of housing cooperatives in B.C:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that local governments throughout British Columbia urge the federal and provincial governments to work together to reduce the uncertainty for vulnerable members of housing cooperatives by ensuring that long-term, cost-shared rental assistance programs are in place as federal cooperative housing agreements expire.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Natural Gas Development and Minister Responsible for Housing**

The Co-op subsidy is a federal government program and the Province of British Columbia has never been involved in the program. The Province has a limited relationship with co-operative housing providers as most co-operatives are administered at the federal level by the Agency for Co-operative Housing.

Co-operative housing projects operate as a form of ownership. Since co-op members are considered homeowners and not renters, they are not eligible for rent supplement programs.

The Province currently provides funding that keeps more than 2,200 co-op units affordable to those with low to middle incomes and we will continue to provide that funding. The Province has committed to maintain our portion of the subsidy in cost-shared developments, where necessary, in order to preserve affordable units. We are working closely with our non-profit partners to develop strategies that will help them succeed when their mortgages are paid and their operating agreements conclude.

**B45 Seniors' Housing**

WHEREAS the lack of appropriate affordable housing, particularly in small rural B.C. communities makes it difficult for seniors and those with special needs to age in place;
AND WHEREAS access to safe, affordable and appropriate housing helps to create vibrant, sustainable communities:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM urge the provincial and federal governments to work with community partners to develop solutions to the lack of seniors' housing and to provide the necessary long-term funding to support the construction of a full range of affordable seniors' housing choices across British Columbia.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Natural Gas Development and Minister Responsible for Housing**

The Province of British Columbia invests in a range of options to help seniors and people with disabilities live as independently as possible. This includes providing affordable housing. Since January 2012, more than 300 people with disabilities have been helped through our Home Adaptions for Independence program (HAFI), which provides $20,000 per home to help low-income seniors live more independently.

The provincial government provides support to more than 51,000 seniors' households across the province through a range of housing options, including:

- over 17,000 households receive Shelter Aid for Elderly Renters (SAFER) benefits. The program was expanded in 2006 and enhanced in 2014 to better meet the needs of low-income seniors. With the new enhanced benefit, the average monthly payment is expected to increase from approximately $150 to $190;
- more than 12,000 supportive and assisted living units for frail seniors; and
- over 21,000 independent social housing units for low-income seniors.

Under the Seniors' Rental Housing initiative, we completed more than 1,200 units of affordable rental housing for seniors and people with disabilities in smaller communities.

**B48 Mass Casualty Medical Preparedness**

WHEREAS in the event of a major disaster, in particular a Cascadia Subduction Zone (CSZ) event (i.e., an earthquake with a magnitude 8 or greater followed by a subsequent tsunami) within BC's southwest seismic activity zone, the system of mass casualty medical emergency preparedness in the province of BC is ineffective for high risk remote communities that do not have Vancouver Island Health Authority (VIHA) hospitals and clinics;

AND WHEREAS fast and wide reaching mass casualty medical strategies are necessary to save lives for communities that will potentially have no access to medical centres and/or hospitals due to catastrophic damage;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM and the Federation of Canadian Municipalities urge the provincial and federal governments to establish a world-class Mass Casualty Medical Emergency Preparedness Plan for high risk communities in BC's southwest seismic activity zone that do not have VIHA hospitals and clinics.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Health**

In British Columbia, the health authorities and the BC Ambulance Service (BCAS) are responsible for the delivery of emergency health services and have robust plans for mass casualty emergencies regardless of where they may happen within the province.

For remote communities that do not have hospitals or clinics, the health authorities work very closely with BCAS to facilitate urgent transport of casualties to the nearest and most appropriate health care facilities in the event that a mass casualty incident occurs. Many remote communities that do not have clinics or hospitals will have a BCAS station that, in conjunction with local municipal emergency response services, can initiate the mass casualty plans with the local emergency supplies held at the BCAS station to begin care while additional emergency response resources are vectored in by land, air and/or sea as appropriate to manage the event.

In known and planned events where the potential for a mass casualty incident is increased, such as concerts and major sporting events, steps are taken to ensure that the appropriate resources and personnel are prepositioned to provide effective medical response should something tragic happen.

In the event of a major disaster, such as a magnitude 8+ Cascadia Subduction Zone (CSZ) earthquake and subsequent tsunami, that causes catastrophic damage to coastal and inland communities resulting in a mass casualty situation, it is important to note that the impact will likely extend to all communities in the region regardless of size and will seriously limit accessibility due to infrastructure and road damage. While efforts are ongoing to make the health system's critical infrastructure and operations resilient to seismic events, it is recognized that a catastrophic earthquake and tsunami will likely damage and overwhelm the capability of the local health resources in the region to operate and respond effectively in the early stages of the disaster.

To ensure an effective and coordinated health response to a catastrophic disaster like a CSZ earthquake, the health system and the Ministry of Health have plans and agreements in place that will facilitate shifting of internal health resources and personnel from unaffected areas within the province to respond to the affected areas. In addition, the Province has entered into mutual

aid agreements with neighbouring provinces, states, and non-governmental organizations to send emergency health resources and personnel quickly to augment the provincial response. The BC health system plans are aligned and integrated with Emergency Management BC's (EMBC) ongoing catastrophic disaster planning as well as with federal planning for a national response to a significant CSZ event. The BC health system is seen as a leader nationally in this area of preparedness and response.

Regardless of the community size, it is important for local governments to encourage their citizens to personally prepare their families to survive for a minimum of 72 hours or more without help. Earthquake preparedness information can be found on EMBC's website: http://embc.gov.bc.ca/em/hazard_preparedness/earthquake_preparedness.html.

**B50 Changes to BC Ambulance Service Resource Allocations**

WHEREAS the Provincial Health Services Authority (PHSA) within the Ministry of Health made the unilateral decision to change service delivery for the BC Ambulance Service (BCAS) has created an unprecedented downloading of costs and risk onto Local Government first responders;

AND WHEREAS the October 2013 changes by BCAS to the Resource Allocation Plan (RAP) has created a negative impact on response time and patient safety:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Province of BC develop an effective, well integrated, patient centred emergency response service for our citizens provided by fire and rescue services and BC Ambulance Service working together.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Health**

The Province of British Columbia appreciates your concern for fiscal accountability, as your local governments continue to determine how to best allocate funding and resources in terms of responding to urgent and routine calls.

The Province is committed to effective, well-integrated, patient-centered emergency response services. Since the changes were implemented, BC Emergency Health Services (BCEHS) has been able to respond to patients with urgent care or injuries one minute faster, on average. Patients with non-urgent conditions are waiting approximately six minutes longer for an ambulance.

Municipalities and fire departments were invited to submit any concerns regarding the Resource Allocation Plan (RAP) for operational and clinical review. Upon reviewing the almost 140 cases submitted, BCEHS was able to determine that patients received the response appropriate for their medical condition and that no negative patient outcomes could be attributed to the changes. BCEHS continues to identify possible performance improvement opportunities that may enhance the quality of a patient's experience of care.

BCEHS has been actively reaching out to concerned municipalities over the last several months and will continue to consult with local governments and first responders throughout the Province about the changes to the RAP. BCEHS is committed to providing timely, high quality and safe pre-hospital care for patients throughout BC while using public resources in an effective and efficient manner.

**B51 Revisions to the Residential Tenancy Act**

WHEREAS the Province of British Columbia has enacted the *Residential Tenancy Act* to provide equal grounds for resolution of issues arising between landlords and tenants and to protect the rights of both landlords and tenants;

AND WHEREAS issues that may threaten life and safety of other tenants, the property or neighbourhood, or breach of local bylaws that continue to arise with respect to landlords' inability to deal with or evict problem tenants in a timely manner, and conversely a tenant's ability to deal with landlords taking advantage of gaps that may exist in the provincial legislation;

AND WHEREAS a number of jurisdictions have adopted and/or support crime free multi-family housing standards which include clauses within a recommended addendum that does not address a timely adjudication period, issues a violation may have on a neighbourhood or how such violation may affect the life and safety of other tenants and/or a neighbourhood:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM urge the Province of British Columbia to initiate a complete review of the *Residential Tenancy Act* in order to address gaps within the legislation which adversely impact both landlords and tenants.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Natural Gas Development and Minister Responsible for Housing**

The *Residential Tenancy Act* was fully reviewed in 2001 and 2002, including extensive community and stakeholder consultation, which resulted in substantial changes to the Act. The revised *Residential Tenancy Act* came into effect in 2004.

Most landlords and tenants live up to their rights and responsibilities. When there are issues and parties cannot come to an agreement on their own, the Residential Tenancy Branch provides dispute resolution services.

The arbitration process is effective. It balances the rights of both landlords and tenants and gives both parties the option to appeal a decision.

We are open to working with key stakeholders to improve our processes but we have no plans to make further amendments to the *Residential Tenancy Act* at this time.

**B53 Centre Line & Shoulder Line Highway Marking**

WHEREAS there is a deterioration of line markings, missing reflectors and unmarked shoulders on many of British Columbia's roads and highways, and the safety of motorists travelling on provincial highways, especially at night, is enhanced with clearly defined reflective centre line and shoulder line marking;

AND WHEREAS wear and tear of line marking is not solely attributed to weather, high-volume traffic, and snow-clearing equipment:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the BC Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure review the effectiveness of the products used for current centre line and shoulder line marking in response to the degradation caused by weather and high-volume traffic; and that all provincial highways be adequately marked.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure**

Safety is the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure's highest priority. Each year the ministry invests $11.3M to repaint over 30,000 kilometres of centreline, lane line and edge line. Since the federal government introduced new regulations prohibiting the use of high VOC (volatile organic compounds) paints in 2012, the Ministry has been actively pursuing ways of improving the durability of line markings, including the use of inlaid marking in high traffic areas.

When the Ministry renewed its contracts for pavement marking in 2014, a number of improvements were made. Selective areas were targeted to receive a thicker application of paint (18 mm vs 16 mm) to increase durability. Staff will be monitoring the effectiveness of this strategy over the next couple of years. We have also placed a greater emphasis on painting edge lines, recognizing that drivers rely on edge lines for guidance, especially at night.

The Ministry will continue to work with paint manufacturers and neighbouring jurisdictions to explore different types of paint and paint compositions with a view to finding a product that has greater durability and lasts longer.

**B54 Highways in British Columbia**

WHEREAS rural and remote communities in British Columbia are experiencing renewed economic development;

AND WHEREAS accessing communities through established transportation routes is a vital component for fostering economic development:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM recommend that the provincial Transportation Minister take a proactive approach and refurbish existing highways accessing northern British Columbia.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure**

The Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure is very aware of the importance of transportation routes in rural and remote communities in British Columbia and recognizes that anticipated growth in these communities, as a result of increased industrial development, will necessitate improvements along transportation corridors.

The Ministry continues to proactively deliver a substantial road rehabilitation program throughout the province. Ministry staff, through regular reviews of the highway infrastructure and with ongoing stakeholder feedback from the public, local governments, First Nations and industry, continues to rehabilitate and repair highways.

The Ministry's Good Roads Cost Less philosophy is one of the main drivers of our rehabilitation program. This approach aims to minimize rehabilitation costs over the life cycle of the infrastructure by extending the life of assets. As part of this philosophy, we conduct annual surveys of road condition to ensure that preservation funding is directed to the areas of the province where preservation is most needed and also to ensure that our preservation budget keeps up with the condition of the infrastructure.

Over the last three years (2011/12 to 2013/14) the Ministry has invested more than $1.3 billion in highway improvement projects upgrading roads and bridges in rural and remote communities around BC, including resurfacing, bridge replacements, four laning and intersection improvements, to name a few.

In addition to our Expansion and Rehabilitation Programs, the Ministry has an annual maintenance program that is delivered continuously by the Maintenance Contractors throughout the province. This program works to maintain and preserve the highway system in its entirety to ensure safety and reliability for all users. The Ministry will continue to monitor changing travel patterns as the economics of rural and remote communities grow and adjust our expansion and rehabilitation programs to ensure our highways remain in good repair.

The work aligns with the priorities of the Ministry's BC on the Move – A Ten year Transportation Plan, in that it will focus on:

- Moving goods and people safely and reliably;
- Growing the economy;
- Connecting and strengthening communities; and
- Maximizing collaboration and investment with partners, including First Nations, the federal government, regional and local governments and the private sector.

**B57 Regulation of Party Buses & Limousines**

WHEREAS:

1. A series of incidents, including the death last year of a Surrey teenager found dying at a gas station, have highlighted the lack of appropriate regulation for the limousine and party bus industry;
2. Responsible industry operators have themselves, supported by the regional taxi industry, called on the Province to impose appropriate regulations through the Passenger Transportation Board to regulate the industry, ensuring the safety of customers; and
3. The Minister of Transportation promised action last year which has not materialized:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the provincial government, through the Minister of Transportation, act on the recommendations of the industry and implement appropriate regulations for the limousine and party bus sector.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure**

The Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure is not contemplating regulatory changes to address "party buses" at this time. Laws already exist that prohibit open liquor and alcohol consumption in vehicles and laws that prohibit underage drinking. Tickets can and have been given to drivers and passengers when they are found violating the law. There are also fines and penalties that can be imposed by the Registrar of Passenger Transportation (the Registrar), including suspending or cancelling the passenger transportation licence, if a "party bus" company is not operating within the law.

The Registrar met with industry representatives on May 20, 2014, to strongly reinforce their legal requirements and expectations for full compliance. This included the elimination of any references to open alcohol on their web pages and in any advertising. Industry has responded to this directive and a number of companies have revised their websites to make the "no alcohol" message more prominent.

The Ministry continues to work with police who inspect buses and check for violations of the *Liquor Control and Licensing Act*, specifically under-age drinking and illegal drugs. Police have and will continue to ticket those people who they catch breaking the law, including those consuming alcohol in an unlicensed public place. Police are encouraged to report all violations to the Registrar.

**B58 Communities in Bloom**

WHEREAS the Province of British Columbia is currently transferring the Provincial Communities in Bloom program from a Crown Corporation to the Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development;

AND WHEREAS the Provincial Communities in Bloom Program was receiving funding from the Provincial Capital Commission in the amount of $10,000 per year, there is a concern the funding will be dropped or reduced;

AND WHEREAS the Communities in Bloom Program has been a benefit to the province and the communities who have chosen to take part:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM request the Ministry of Community, Sport and Culture to maintain or increase the funding for the Communities in Bloom Program.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development**

The Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development (Ministry) would like to acknowledge the hard work, dedication and commitment of the staff and volunteers of the BC Communities in Bloom society to foster civic pride, environmental responsibility and beautification with focus on the promotion and importance of green spaces in community settings.

The BC Communities in Bloom program received funding in 2014 through the Arts, Culture and BC Art Council Branch of the Ministry. These funding decisions are made on an annual basis. Once this 2014's program is completed, BC Communities in Bloom is encouraged to report on its work and to connect with Ministry staff on funding options for the coming year.

**B59 Resource Extraction Revenue Sharing**

WHEREAS resource extraction taxation from northern British Columbia constitutes a large portion of total provincial revenues;

AND WHEREAS communities located near resource projects (such as Mount Milligan Mine) have been and will continue to be economically impacted by the development and operations of such projects;

AND WHEREAS the Province has entered into agreements for mining revenue sharing with First Nations and "Fair Share" agreements for oil and gas revenue with certain local governments in the northeast:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM call on the Province to enter into fair agreements with municipalities and regional districts affected by resource development in their region, to appropriately share resource taxation revenues in order to support local infrastructure and programming.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development**

The Province of British Columbia continues to share an interest with UBCM on many key aspects of Strong Fiscal Futures, such as growing the economy and making a strong local government system stronger. Over the last year much has been accomplished that supports Strong Fiscal Futures, including: signing a renewed Gas Tax Agreement with the federal government; continuation of the Small Community Grants program; official launch of the Small Communities Fund under the New Build Canada Plan; and legislative amendments that place greater responsibility for transportation in Metro Vancouver in the hands of the Mayors' Council.

Strong Fiscal Futures calls for a fairer distribution of the benefits from economic growth. The Province is with communities that may host Liquefied Natural Gas facilities to ensure that the opportunities are realized and communities have the resources to meet the challenges associated with growth. The Premier has committed to creating the framework for a Rural Dividend for communities in BC. The Minister of Community, Sport and Cultural Development is working with Parliamentary Secretary Barnett and the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations on the creation and implementation of the Rural Dividend.

There are clear linkages between the directions identified in Strong Fiscal Futures and the Province's Taxpayer Accountability Principles. To move forwards on issues that our organizations have identified over the last year, the Province is working with UBCM to secure several meeting dates for 2015. By creating more structure and opportunities for regular dialogue, the Province and UBCM will better address our shared duty to ensure the delivery of effective, responsive services to citizens.

**B60 Liquor Revenue Allocation**

WHEREAS the Province of BC is relaxing liquor regulations, which will increase the accessibility of alcoholic beverages;

AND WHEREAS it is expected that provincial liquor revenues will increase as a result the easier availability of alcoholic beverages;

AND WHEREAS the consumption of alcoholic beverages can have negative health and social impacts, including addiction and social disorder;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM request the Province to allocate a portion of their liquor revenues to fund increased:

- resourcing for provincial liquor licence inspectors;
- resourcing to alcohol addiction and treatment services;
- policing of liquor licensed establishments and liquor related offences; and
- late night transit services to reduce drinking and driving offences and late night disorder.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Justice**

A number of the BC Liquor Policy Review recommendations are aimed specifically at addressing issues associated with alcohol misuse. These include increased public education, requiring training of everyone selling and serving alcohol and stricter enforcement of existing legislation and regulations.

The Liquor Control and Licensing Branch takes a risk based approach, directing efforts to areas where we believe there is greatest risk. One of the recommendations in the Liquor Policy Review was that the Liquor Control and Licensing Branch have adequate resources to fulfill its mandate so that inspectors can continue to work closely with police, targeting problem establishments.

Revenues from liquor sales contribute to the government's Consolidated Revenue Fund and ultimately help fund vital services for British Columbians. A portion of these funds go directly to help pay for health and social programs.

**B61 Local Road Eligibility Under the New Building Canada Fund**

WHEREAS the Government of Canada has introduced the New Building Canada Fund, a nation-wide partnered infrastructure funding program for municipalities to address Canada's alarming infrastructure deficit, including $1 billion for communities under 100,000 in population as the Small Communities Fund;

AND WHEREAS because the majority of critical infrastructure renewal needs require projects addressing all three of water, wastewater, and road components together, the New Building Canada Fund's elimination of local road applicability will jeopardize the financial ability for most small communities to undertake such infrastructure renewal projects:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Union of British Columbia Municipalities petition the Province to negotiate the inclusion of local road applicability for infrastructure projects submitted by municipalities under the New Building Canada Fund's Small Communities Fund component.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development**

Negotiations with the federal government regarding the New Building Canada Fund (NBCF) began in the fall of 2014. The exclusion of local roads as an eligible category under the NBCF is a concern heard across the country; and this has been raised to the Government of Canada by multiple provinces.

Although local roads are not an eligible category under the NBCF, it is now an eligible category under the application-based pooled funding program of the Gas Tax Strategic Priorities Fund. Along with local project priorities, consideration of a community's Asset Management Strategies will be an important component for both the renewed Gas Tax Fund and the NBCF.

The Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development is currently in discussions with UBCM about the on-going structure and delivery options of the permanent Gas Tax Fund and any new program decisions will be clearly communicated to all local governments.

**B63 Water Pricing Principles**

WHEREAS the Province of BC has introduced new water pricing principles as part of the *Water Sustainability Act* which will increase the annual rental costs for the waterworks licenses held by local governments;

AND WHEREAS the Water Pricing Strategy is tantamount to downloading the costs of the implementation of the *Water Sustainability Act*:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM encourage the Province to ensure local government water purveyors are not subjected to increased costs for waterworks licenses.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Environment**

British Columbia's new *Water Sustainability Act* received Royal Assent in May 2014. The new Act will bring greater certainty and security for all users and clearer rules for managing conflicts during times of scarcity. Our demand for water province-wide is increasing, in part driven by changing climate, expanding resource development and growing communities. The new Act creates more tools to manage BC water resources which mean new business for the provincial government.

There is strong public support for the new Act including full cost recovery to ensure it is successfully delivered in its entirety. A new fee and rental schedule will be included in an updated Water Regulation, one of the key regulations that will be revised before the new Act is brought into effect in 2016.

The last major review of water fees and rentals occurred almost 10 years ago. As a result of that review, water rental rates for local authorities were reduced from about $1.54 per 1000 cubic metres to $1.10 per 1000 cubic metres and have not changed since 2006.

In March 2014, government released a discussion paper on "Pricing BC's Water" and requested public feedback on seven principles to help shape options for a new water fee and rental schedule. Government received more than 130 submissions including comments from local government, stakeholder groups and citizens. In addition, the Province met with key users during the Fall of 2014 to share its analysis and discuss its proposal for a new fee and rental schedule.

British Columbians have consistently ranked water as one of the Province's most valuable natural assets. Under the proposed new fee and rental schedule, all sectors would see increased water rental rates beginning in 2016. The proposal will recover the cost of implementing the new Act. The proposal addresses fairness and equity by treating surface and groundwater users consistently and better aligns related water uses. Assessing new fees and rentals for groundwater use is also consistent with government's long-standing Living Water Smart commitment to regulate groundwater use.

Most British Columbians are connected to a municipal water system and pay a utility bill to their municipality, the holder of the water licence. Most of the costs are associated with building and maintaining drinking water treatment and distribution infrastructure. For municipal water systems, the proposed increase in annual rentals would typically translate to about a $1-$2 per year per household. Unlike other water users, local authorities would continue to be charged on

actual water use rather than licensed volume, providing opportunities to mitigate cost implications through ongoing conservation.

**B64 Local Improvement Charge for Energy Efficiency Retrofits**

WHEREAS energy efficiency and renewable energy retrofits in existing buildings offer the best opportunities to reduce community energy use and greenhouse gas emissions in the medium and short term;

AND WHEREAS a lack of suitable financing options are a key barrier to residential and commercial building energy efficiency and renewable energy retrofits:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Province:

1. Amend the BC *Community Charter*, the City of *Vancouver Charter* and other legislation as required to enable local governments to use local improvement financing mechanisms for energy efficiency and renewable energy improvements on residential and commercial private properties in BC.
2. Work together with BC local governments and energy utilities to develop standards and guidelines for effective municipally-run residential and commercial energy retrofit financing programs.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development**

The Province of British Columbia is interested in supporting local governments to reduce community-wide and corporate greenhouse gas emissions and energy use. Legislative amendments to enable the use of current or additional financing mechanisms for energy efficiency and renewable energy improvements on private property would require significant and careful analysis and are not being considered at this time.

The Province encourages local governments and energy utilities to work together to develop financing mechanisms for energy efficiency and renewable energy improvements on residential and commercial private properties in BC.

**B65 Provincial Woodstove Program**

WHEREAS the Provincial Wood Stove Exchange Program is a successful locally delivered program that improves air quality province-wide; supports local, renewable and affordable wood-fuel use; and stimulates small business activity in participating communities;

AND WHEREAS the ability of local governments to plan and deliver the Program efficiently and effectively to local residents and small businesses is negatively impacted by uncertainty in the availability and timing of funding:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM request the Province consider providing stable funding to support the Woodstove Exchange Program for a five year period beginning in 2014.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Environment**

Since its inception in 2007, over two million dollars have been invested in the Woodstove Exchange Program, resulting in over 6000 wood stove change outs and numerous educational events and outreach products. Participation in the program benefits local communities through reduced pollution, improved air quality and greater community awareness of the importance of clean wood burning. Individuals who participate benefit by receiving an incentive towards the purchase of a cleaner, more efficient appliance to replace an older high polluting appliance.

Until recently, the Woodstove Exchange Program has been funded yearly. Unfortunately, due to fiscal restraints, funding for the Woodstove Exchange Program was not available in 2013; however, we are pleased that the program was funded with an additional $200,000 in 2014. The call for proposals went out to communities in BC in September 2014. Information on the program is available at http://www.bcairquality.ca/topics/wood-stove-exchange-program/. Future funding for this program, which is a well-established initiative of the Ministry of Environment, will be assessed year by year.

**B67 Industry Resource Benefit**

WHEREAS BC resources such as water and natural gas may be transported over long distances through pipelines;

AND WHEREAS BC residents are frequently unable to access the resource being transported through their area in those pipelines:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM work with the Province to develop a system that enables BC residents to cost-effectively access resources which are being transported through their area.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Energy and Mines**

Long-distance natural gas pipelines and electricity wires are not designed for local distribution and the facilities needed to transform and distribute the energy to local users may be extremely expensive.

BC's rocky terrain makes natural gas pipelines dramatically more costly than in Alberta and, in some cases, alternative means such as trucking in compressed natural gas may be more economical.

For both electricity and natural gas, there are existing processes in place for individuals and communities to apply to a utility to receive service through a system extension. Residents also have the option to work with the BC Utilities Commission to create their own private utility.

**B68 Progress Report on Regional District Governance**

WHEREAS the Province of British Columbia in cooperation with UBCM has been refining the *Community Charter* to improve the function of local government:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Province of British Columbia provide a progress report and evaluation of the recommendations from the 2010 Regional District Task Force Report and conduct a review of the current regional district governance structure with the intention to continue to improve the relationship between municipalities and regional districts in British Columbia.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development**

The Regional District Task Force (Task Force) was created by UBCM in 2008 to consider issues and challenges facing regional districts and to identify possible solutions and strategies. The Task Force recognized that regional districts are a federation of municipalities and electoral areas and are a resilient and established form of local government able to meet the unique and changing circumstances of particular regions.

The Task Force's 2010 recommendations led to a program of both legislative and non-legislative incremental change focused on practical problems. Legislative amendments over the past number of years have included timelines for service reviews, streamlining land use bylaw approvals, allowing regional districts to borrow from their own reserve funds, enabling regional districts to seek elector opinion on an issue of regional interest and most recently, enabling regional districts to set their own oath of office.

Non-legislative activities have included supporting the development of regional district political leadership through the Local Government Leadership Academy, working with ten regional districts in the three high growth regions on their regional growth strategies and continuing to assist regional districts in resolving service disputes. The Ministry has also worked in partnership with UBCM and LGMA to increase the dispute resolution capacity of senior staff and elected officials (e.g., working with RD Chairs and CAOs on conflict resolution and collaboration training at local government conferences and developing and documenting best practices).

The Ministry continues to be interested in working with local governments on practical problems and issues. For example, the Ministry recognizes that regional districts are diverse and can face unique challenges that may require customized solutions. To accommodate regional diversity, the Province has in the past provided requested regulatory authorities to regional districts (e.g., stormwater treatment, feral cats, and explosives). Additional authority, when appropriate, can be used to address issues that are specific to a regional district.

The Ministry recognizes the important role that Regional Districts play in efficient, economic and effective service delivery in the Province.

**B69 National Dementia Strategy**

WHEREAS Alzheimer's disease and other dementias are progressive, degenerative diseases of the brain that cause thinking and memory to become seriously impaired;

AND WHEREAS Alzheimer's disease and other dementias most often occur in people over the age of 65 but can strike adults at any age;

AND WHEREAS Alzheimer's disease and other dementias affect more than 500,000 Canadians currently and that this figure is projected to reach 1.1 million within a generation;

AND WHEREAS Alzheimer's disease and other dementias also takes their toll on hundreds of thousands of families and care partners;

AND WHEREAS an estimated further three million Canadians face the burden and challenges of providing care for those suffering with Alzheimer's disease and other dementias;

AND WHEREAS there is no known cause or cure for this devastating illness;

AND WHEREAS the cost related to the health care system is in the billions and only going to increase, at a time when our health care system is already facing enormous financial challenges;

AND WHEREAS Canada, unlike many countries, does not have a national dementia strategy;

AND WHEREAS there is an urgent need to plan and raise awareness and understanding about Alzheimer's disease and other dementias for the sake of improving the quality of life of the people it touches;

AND WHEREAS MP Claude Gravelle, Nickel Belt, has introduced Bill C-356 – An Act Respecting a National Strategy for Dementia, as he works for broad, all party and non -partisan support for an issue that touches us all, and his legislation calls for a national plan that includes the development of strategies in primary health care, in health promotion and prevention of illness, in community development, in building community capacity and care partner engagement, investments in research and other (advisory board, objectives, investment in research, and caregivers and more):

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that all levels of government and the Federation of Municipalities adopt a national dementia strategy, and urge all citizens of our communities to become more aware and engaged concerning the far-reaching effects of this devastating disease.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Health**

As the prevalence of dementia continues to rise worldwide, a number of countries have released national dementia strategies. Similarly, Provinces and Territories have developed or are in the process of developing a dementia strategy/framework. At the federal level, the 2013 Speech from the Throne made a commitment to renew investments in health research to address the growing prevalence of dementia and related illnesses.

Discussion of a national dementia strategy for Canada has gained some momentum; however, at this time, no decision has been made to proceed. At the May 2014 Conference of Deputy Ministers of Health, Federal/Provincial/Territorial Deputy Ministers agreed to have a discussion on a national dementia strategy in the upcoming October 2, 2014, Federal/Provincial/Territorial Ministers Meeting.

Additionally, in November 2012, the Ministry of Health (the Ministry) launched its Dementia Action Plan (Link: http://www.health.gov.bc.ca/library/publications/year/2012/dementia-action-plan.pdf). Notable accomplishments from the Dementia Action Plan include:

- Updated HealthLink BC, SeniorsBC, and Home and Community Care websites and print resources with information on brain health, planning for healthy aging and living with dementia.
- Expansion of the Alzheimer Society of BC's First Link® Program, which provides connections to learning, services and support to individuals diagnosed with dementia and their families.
- Health care providers who work in residential care facilities with people who have dementia are being trained with the P.I.E.C.E.S. program, which provides a systematic framework for detection, assessment and care planning using a person-centred approach.
- The 48/6 Model of Care for hospitalized seniors is being used in hospitals across BC. The 48/6 model focuses on screening and assessment in six key care areas and the development of a personalized care plan in 48 hours.
- A funding partnership is supporting a new BC Alzheimer's Research Award and the Djavad Mowafaghian Centre for Brain Health.

The Ministry is now in the process of refreshing the Dementia Action Plan into a three-year plan, which is expected to be completed early in 2015 with implementation to begin in 2015/16. The refreshed plan will build on successes from the existing plan and align with priorities identified in the Ministry's key planning document, Setting Priorities for the BC Health System (2014). Based on a review of local and international best practices, a leading practice framework will be established to guide additional actions.

## B70 Sobering & Assessment Centres

WHEREAS there is significant concern for the well-being and safety of individuals who are under the influence or acutely intoxicated on the street or in police custody, there is recognition that first responders and emergency services lack the capacity to safely support these individuals during times of acute intoxication;

AND WHEREAS the number of calls for service for individuals who are acutely intoxicated places a heavy burden on first responder and emergency services and without the necessary resources first responders are left with very few options to ensure the safety of these individuals:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the provincial government provide resources to establish sobering and assessment centres at key locations that are identified by first responders and regional health authorities across the province.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Health**

The Province of British Columbia has made it a priority to build a comprehensive system of mental health and substance use services across the province, making record investments totalling $1.3 billion annually.

The Ministry of Health recognizes that additional addiction services are required and we are working with all health authorities and the not-for-profit sector to create additional capacity within the substance use system. The Ministry is currently leading a project to improve access to addiction treatment by creating an additional 500 substance use spaces across the province. Using Needs-Based Planning methodologies, the Ministry is working with health authorities to determine the type, level and location of services that will be implemented. The additional 500 spaces are being implemented in a phased approach; the project will be complete by 2017. The health authorities have submitted preliminary plans for the first phase, identifying high priority/immediate need beds based on existing planning processes.

Sobering and Assessment Beds/Mats fall within the purview of the 500 spaces project. These beds/mats are funded by the health authorities to provide a short-term (less than 24 hours) safe place for people under the influence of substances to have shelter, access to washrooms and a snack. The objective of these beds is to provide short-term respite.

## B71 Assertive Community Treatment Teams

WHEREAS Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) Teams provide community based support for adults with serious and persistent mental illness and significant functional impairments who have not connected with, or responded well to, traditional outpatient mental health care and rehabilitation services; thereby greatly improving their quality of life, overall functioning and housing stability;

AND WHEREAS the intervention of ACT Teams decreases visits to the local emergency department, stays in hospitals and reduces contacts with police and correction services currently a great demand on local government resources:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the provincial government provide additional funding to health authorities to provide ACT Teams in local governments across the province where the impact on resources and citizens warrants this type of intervention.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Health**

The Province of British Columbia has made it a priority to build a comprehensive system of mental health and substance-use services across the province, making record investments through the Ministry of Health and health authorities totalling $1.3 billion annually.

The Ministry is providing $20.25 million beginning in 2014/15 for health authorities to invest in more local programs and supports to improve care for this high needs population. This funding includes $2 million in matched funds for each of the five regional health authorities to assist in strengthening approved services for this client population as part of an overall incremental provincial approach. The services to be planned include: specialized acute care; tertiary care services; or, development of intensive community services such as ACT teams. Business plans are being developed, and health authorities have been encouraged to consult with, and obtain the support of, key stakeholders in their development.

In November 2014, the Interior Health Authority announced they were establishing ACT teams in Kamloops and Kelowna and a crisis response team in Williams Lake to serve the Cariboo-Chilcotin and 100 Mile House. Additionally, in December 2014, the Fraser Health Authority also announced the implementation of an ACT team for Abbotsford and Mission, and a second ACT team for Surrey and North Delta.

**B72 Access to Natural Gas**

WHEREAS we are aware there is an abundance of natural gas in BC;

AND WHEREAS there are many residents and businesses who, for economic, health and environmental reasons, are requesting access to our resource;

AND WHEREAS the people need to require the British Columbia Utilities Commission to examine the natural gas extension test and connection policies in order to provide a more reasonable Utility System Extension Test:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Province of BC, through the British Columbia Utilities Commission and in consultation with the Union of British Columbia Municipalities, review natural gas extension policies such that more residents and business throughout British Columbia can take advantage of the economic and environmental benefits of natural gas.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Energy and Mines**

Natural gas public utilities are regulated by the BC Utilities Commission (BCUC) including terms and conditions to extend service to new customers. The BCUC has approved a mains extension test where the cost-benefit analysis demonstrates a benefit to utility customers.

At present, the natural gas utility FortisBC plans to apply to the BCUC for a revision of the mains extension test and policies in 2015. In advance of this application, FortisBC has established a stakeholder consultation process that includes a representative from the Ministry of Energy and Mines and the Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training. The process also includes representatives from several communities that currently do not have access to natural gas.

The Province encourages UBCM to become involved either by working with community representatives in this stakeholder process, or by registering as an intervener in FortisBC's forthcoming application to the BCUC.

The BC Natural Gas Strategy, published in 2012, focuses on increasing natural gas use in applications where higher-carbon fuels are displaced, such as export – where coal-fired power generation may be displaced – and in domestic transportation – where diesel is displaced.

**B73 BC Ambulance Service as an Essential Service**

WHEREAS the current model for providing ambulance service throughout BC is not working in rural communities, resulting in BC Ambulance Service having numerous out of service shifts in rural communities and patients not being able to receive timely, essential health care;

AND WHEREAS recruiting initiatives in rural communities have produced only short term results due to unsustainable wages paid to call-out attendants:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM request that the provincial government recognize BC Ambulance Service as an essential service and establish a new model for rural communities that would ensure full time ambulance coverage and timely access to health care.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Health, BC Emergency Health Services**

The Province of British Columbia and the Ministry of Health have been clear that improving health care services in rural and remote areas of British Columbia is a priority.

Recruiting and retaining skilled workers to rural and remote communities is a challenge that is common to many employers and sectors, not just those that provide health care services. The Ministry recognizes the need for a framework to inform future planning decisions by looking at the short and long-term needs of a community's health care needs, as well as taking a fresh look at existing supports.

The Province is pleased to note an innovative patient care model, aimed at improving gaps in rural and remote health services, is being developed in collaboration with the regional health authorities and BC Emergency Health Services (BCEHS) called community paramedicine. Community paramedicine is a broad concept and can include many different program models, depending on the particular needs of a community. For example, paramedics might provide home support to seniors and others with specific health care needs, to facilitate patients receiving care at home.

The Ministry has committed to an additional 80 full-time equivalent paramedic positions throughout the province over the next five years to help develop community paramedicine programs in rural communities across BC.

BCEHS will be engaging with health authorities and other community partners over the next number of months to determine how community paramedicine may provide value and has committed to identifying 3-4 communities for initial rollout to be implemented in the spring of 2015.

The Ministry expects this direction to provide better patient outcomes, better patient experience and more consistent ambulance coverage, particularly in rural and remote BC.

**B75 Province as Diking Authority**

WHEREAS the Province of British Columbia has designated municipalities as diking authorities, and established a wide range of authoritative powers over them including requirements to fully administer and resource ongoing dike maintenance, flood protection planning, monitoring, inspection, reporting, and other associated work as well as to substantively fund disaster prevention and relief initiatives;

AND WHEREAS notwithstanding s. 2(b) of the *Community Charter*, the administrative and financial resources required to undertake these responsibilities are an increasingly unsustainable burden to small communities:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Province of British Columbia be re-established as the diking authority in municipalities less than 20,000 in population and in rural electoral areas.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations**

The Province of British Columbia realizes that, depending on the length and complexity of diking systems, both large and small communities can be challenged in providing adequate flood protection. The Province continues to support diking authorities through the provincial Dike Safety and Flood Protection programs.

The Province is currently in discussions with the federal government regarding the possible implementation of new federal programs in BC, including the National Disaster Mitigation Strategy and a new Flood Protection Program.

**B76 Flood Mitigation**

WHEREAS sections 7 and 8 of the *Emergency Program Act* grant the Minister, and the pertinent local authority, the power to act where an emergency is "imminent" or "threatens;" section 10 grants the Minister the power to act "to prevent;" and section 10(k) specifically grants the power to "construct works" ... "to prevent;"

AND WHEREAS a local authority has the same powers as those granted to the Minister in accordance with section 13(1)(c):

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM ask the said Minister to authorize payment of up to fifty percent (50%) of the cost to "construct works" approved "to prevent" "imminent" and/or threats of "disasters."

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Justice**

Flood mitigation infrastructure must be designed, engineered and constructed to meet provincial standards and function adequately over time. Works conducted under an imminent threat, characterized as within hours or days of certainty, typically cannot meet design standards thus the Province does not have a program to fund permanent works under imminent threat.

The Province of British Columbia acknowledges that both large and small communities can be challenged in providing adequate flood protection. As such, the Province continues to support local authorities through both the Provincial Dike Safety and the Flood Protection Programs. The Province is also in discussions with the federal government regarding the possible implementation of new programs in BC, including the National Disaster Mitigation Strategy and a new Provincial Disaster Mitigation Program.

**B77 BC Building Code Changes**

WHEREAS the BC Building Code fire department response time of ten minutes is an unrealistic expectation to impose on municipalities with paid on-call fire departments;

AND WHEREAS the new unprotected opening and sprinklering requirements for fire department response times of greater than ten minutes significantly impacts the affordability of homes and imposes unrealistic costs and potential safety risks for municipalities required to upgrade to larger water connections for sprinklering:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the BC Building Code be amended allowing municipalities with paid on-call fire departments a fire department response time of fifteen minutes.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Natural Gas Development and Minister Responsible for Housing**

The BC Building Code requires builders to provide houses with an adequate level of fire protection based on the time it takes for a fire department to respond to a fire in the building. The response time requirements are intended to establish a fire hazard benchmark for building sites, not a performance requirement for fire departments.

Ultimately, the objective of the BC Building Code and of this requirement in particular, is to provide a minimum level of safety for occupants of all buildings. Where communities do not or cannot provide 10-minute fire department response time, buildings are required to achieve the minimum level of safety through other means. Ensuring a minimum level of safety to building occupants is the responsibility of the owner, not the local government or their fire department.

**B79 Automatic Fire Sprinklers**

WHEREAS fire kills eight individuals in Canada every week, residential property fires account for 40% of all fires, and 73% of all fire deaths occur in residential properties;

AND WHEREAS automatic fire sprinkler technology exists, which is proven to be effective, reliable and affordable (approximately 94 cents per square foot for residential construction), that will virtually eliminate fire deaths in residential properties thereby enhancing the safety of first responders including firefighters, paramedics, police and the public:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM request that the British Columbia provincial government enact legislation to require automatic fire sprinklers be installed in every new occupancy where individuals will sleep through its 2015 BC Building Code.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Natural Gas Development and Minister Responsible for Housing**

Sprinklers are one of many factors that contribute to providing fire safety in a building. Fire protection systems in a building could also include any or all of the following:

- Smoke and fire alarms;
- Non-combustible materials for walls and floors;
- Proper storage of waste materials; and
- Proper fire safety evacuation plan.

The BC Building Code sets the minimum standard for new construction and is based on the model National Building Code of Canada which is updated on a five year cycle. Suggested changes to the minimum acceptable level of fire protection are most appropriately submitted to the National Research Council, Canadian Codes Centre. Each proposal is given consideration by a national expert technical committee for inclusion within the National Building Code.

**B80 Funding for Retrofitting Older Multi-family Wood-frame Dwellings with Fire Suppressing Sprinkler Systems**

WHEREAS many communities in Canada are home to older wood frame multi-family dwellings; AND WHEREAS these buildings provide a large inventory of affordable housing in our communities;

AND WHEREAS many of these buildings were constructed prior to the mandatory implementation of fire suppressing sprinkling systems;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM and the Federation of Canadian Municipalities work with senior levels of government in an effort to have infrastructure funding made available to building owners, including care facilities, so that these buildings can be retrofitted with sprinkling systems;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this be accomplished with minimal impact to the residents.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Natural Gas Development and Minister Responsible for Housing**

The BC Building Code does not require that existing buildings conform retroactively to new Code requirements, such as requiring sprinkler systems. If a residential building is converted to a care home or other use, the most recent requirements of the BC Building Code will apply.

The Province of British Columbia supports the consistent application of the BC Building Code as the minimum level of acceptable safety throughout British Columbia.

**B81 Asia-Pacific Northern Transportation Infrastructure Strategy**

WHEREAS economic development growth in the Northwest is resulting in a steady increase to road and rail traffic along the Highway 16 corridor which is creating safety concerns and negatively impacting communities;

AND WHEREAS Highway 16 is the northern link to the Asia-Pacific Gateway, and upgrading key road transportation corridors to support trade is a priority in the Province of BC's "Pacific Gateway Transportation Strategy 2012–2020:"

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM advocate for the provincial government to initiate an Asia-Pacific northern infrastructure strategy to address barriers to trade and transportation and impacts to northern communities along Highway 16, and that such a strategy include participation by northern stakeholder communities and industry.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure**

As a result of current and anticipated future economic development growth in the Northwest, the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure appreciates that the steady increase to road and rail traffic along the Highway 16 corridor is creating community impact concerns.

In response to these concerns the Ministry, through its Pacific Gateway Initiative, is in the process of developing plans to analyse the transportation trade network. This analysis will have a multi-modal focus on both road and rail along Highway 16.

The work aligns with the priorities of the Ministry's *BC on the Move – A Ten year Transportation Plan*, in that it will focus on:

- Moving goods and people safely and reliably
- Growing the economy
- Connecting and strengthening communities
- Maximizing collaboration and investment with partners, including First Nations, the federal government, regional and local governments and the private sector.

**B87 Dedicated Ministry for Local Government Affairs**

WHEREAS there used to be a dedicated provincial ministry of local government affairs, focused principally on local government affairs;

AND WHEREAS the range of issues local governments are required to manage is becoming more complex; other orders of government are devolving more and more responsibilities on to local governments; and the Province has diminished the importance of, and reduced support for local governments by its previous removal of the Ministry of Municipal Affairs:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Union of British Columbia Municipalities petition the Province to consider the re-establishment of a ministry to focus solely on local government affairs.

**REPSONSE: Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development**

The Province of British Columbia appreciates the intent behind a stand-alone Ministry of Local Government. The Province wants to see that local government interests are well represented within the provincial government and that local governments have a single portal to the Province. The Province believes that the current configuration works well because it builds constructive linkages with culture and sports, key components of healthy communities. Local governments can be assured that the Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development has strong leadership, capable staff and a plethora of programs all supporting local governments.

**B88 Protection of Local Water Resources & Watershed Land**

WHEREAS it is recognized that water is a public trust and the UBCM membership has consistently endorsed resolutions emphasizing protection and control of local water resources, and that adequate tools are required to enable local authorities to enact measures for protection of watersheds;

AND WHEREAS the provincial government has recently released further details concerning implementation of its commitment to modernize the *Water Act*, which includes a strategy to protect water flows for fish and the environment; regulate groundwater; improve governance; and promote conservation, in order to address issues of source water protection, industrial pollution and land-use changes:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM request the Ministry of Environment to proceed in its efforts to modernize the *Water Act* including full consultation with First Nations, to ensure that the new *Water Sustainability Act* establishes a strong enabling framework, in the context of provincial and federal oversight and regulatory backstop, that:

- increases the local role in key decisions affecting the health of watersheds;
- ensures protection for water for fish and the environment in the context of local conditions;
- regulates groundwater;
- promotes water conservation;
- recognizes First Nations Rights and Title; and
- establishes a meaningful role for local government, First Nations, and local watershed authorities regarding approvals and control.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Environment**

British Columbia's new *Water Sustainability Act* received Royal Assent in May 2014. The new Act will bring greater certainty and security for all users and clearer rules for managing conflicts during times of scarcity. Our demand for water province-wide is increasing, in part driven by changing climate, expanding resource development and growing communities. The new Act creates more tools to manage BC water resources, which means new business for the provincial government.

The new Act will ensure that water is available for fish and the environment through new requirements to consider environmental flow needs, provide the ability to temporarily restrict water use to protect critical environmental flow needs, as well prohibit dumping of debris into streams and aquifers. Under the new Act, non-domestic groundwater users will require a license and be subject to fees and rentals.

The Act will help improve water use efficiency through expanded requirements for beneficial use, as well as the ability to establish water conservation targets and carry out conservation audits

Planning provisions in the new Act will enable plans to be developed and implemented to prevent or address conflicts between water use and ecosystem health. New governance tools will include the ability to delegate decisions and activities to other organizations and allow for

greater participation in decision processes. Supporting regulations to enhance water governance will be developed in the coming years.

The new Act is not intended to impede current or future First Nations treaty negotiations and contains provisions that facilitate the interests in water established in treaties.

**B91 Remediation for Brownfields Acquired Through Tax Sale**

WHEREAS rural communities acquire brownfield properties through tax sale;

AND WHEREAS rural communities continue to lack resources to remediate brownfields:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Province of British Columbia commit to a funding program to assist local governments in remediating brownfield sites acquired through a tax sale.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Environment**

The Province of British Columbia understands the challenges local governments can face through the involuntary acquisition of contaminated sites or brownfields as a result of property owner tax default and the subsequent inability to sell for taxes owing. In recognition of this, the *Environmental Management Act* (EMA) provides a statutory exemption from liability to government bodies under these circumstances.

Despite the existing liability exemption, the problem of an idle and sometimes contaminated brownfield site remains a problem for local governments that assume ownership of these sites. In recognition of the broader challenges that contaminated sites and brownfield sites can pose, the *Environmental Management Amendment Act* (Bill 13, 2004) provided enabling provisions for a Land Remediation Fund (LRF), part of which would be available for the purposes of government programs in relation to brownfield development and orphan site remediation.

As part of the Ministry of Environment's review initiated in October 2014 of the contaminated sites legislative regime, the Ministry proposes to further assess and consider the potential for implementing a LRF that would provide assistance for brownfields and orphan site assessment and remediation.

**B93 Home Energy Labeling**

WHEREAS home ownership represents the most significant investment many British Columbians will make in their lifetime;

AND WHEREAS the Province of British Columbia has introduced new energy performance requirements into the B.C. Building Code for Part 9 buildings (e.g. residential up to three-storeys and under 600 square metres) effective December 2014 but measurement and verification of energy performance will not be required for Part 9 residential building permitting to provide consumer information and ensure quality construction;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Province of British Columbia consider adding an energy assessment and EnerGuide label to the requirements for new Part 9 residential buildings.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Natural Gas Development and Minister Responsible for Housing**

The changes to the BC Building Code related to Part 9 buildings do not include specific energy performance targets. Compliance with the BC Building Code ensures that all buildings in British Columbia achieve a minimum level of energy efficiency performance. Required labelling may provide an additional level of information, but consumers can expect all buildings constructed under the new requirements to meet a minimum level of energy efficiency.

Labelling houses and other buildings is an administrative requirement that does not fall within the current scope of the BC Building Code, however may be voluntarily provided by builders or building owners. The Province is focused on supporting compliance with the new energy efficiency requirements in the BC Building Code.

The EnerGuide rating system for homes is currently being updated, which will require further analysis and consultation before considering the relationship between the EnerGuide program and the BC Building Code.

**B94 Benchmarking Tools for Building Energy Use**

WHEREAS:

1. a study by the United States Environmental Protection Agency has shown that energy benchmarking has resulted in an average 7% reduction in energy use of participating buildings over a period of 3 years;
2. on September 24, 2013 Vancouver City Council endorsed: F. THAT as part of a comprehensive strategy on building retrofit to enable reaching Greenest City GHG goals, Council direct City staff to develop recommendations for Council consideration on energy reporting requirements for larger existing buildings in the City of Vancouver, and staff have identified provincial action as important to achieving this goal;
3. energy benchmarking is a low cost practice that enables building owners to identify savings opportunities;
4. nine municipalities in the US require energy benchmarking for larger buildings (typically 50,000 square feet or larger);
5. energy benchmarking software called ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager is available for free through Natural Resources Canada and is the same platform being used by all nine municipalities in the US that are currently regulating energy benchmarking;
6. energy benchmarking identifies the highest energy consuming buildings to target building energy performance support and inform public policy and program design; and
7. energy benchmarking enables evaluation of the effectiveness of municipal strategies to reduce energy use in existing buildings (measure progress over time) that are developed in response to the *Local Government Act* section 877(3), "An official community plan must include targets for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in the area covered by the plan, and policies and actions of the local government proposed with respect to achieving those targets:"

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM:

A. request provincial amendments to the *Vancouver Charter*, *Local Government Act* and the *Community Charter* in order to empower local governments to require annual reporting of building energy use data to be submitted by building owners or designate, that enables normalized comparison benchmarking between similar buildings (area, use, type of equipment, etc.); and
B. request additional amendments to grant local governments the authority to enable the public release of non-confidential and non-competitive building energy benchmarking information via a municipal website or that of a delegated organization, two years following the submission of reporting data by building owners to local governments and following an accuracy review by owners.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development**

The Province of British Columbia recognizes that energy efficiency is one of the lowest cost ways to reduce energy bills and greenhouse gas emissions. As part of the five Pacific Coast jurisdictions that make up the Pacific Coast Collaborative, the Province supports benchmarking as an important strategy in increasing the energy efficiency of large buildings and reducing carbon emissions in the region.

While legislative amendments are not under consideration at this time, the Province is exploring approaches and policy options in relation to enabling potential benchmarking activities, in particular for commercial and large multi-unit residential buildings in BC.

**B96 Streetlights & Carbon Neutrality**

WHEREAS BC Municipalities who signed the Climate Action Charter were supposed to achieve carbon neutrality by 2012 and streetlights represent a significant portion of electrical usage, especially for small northern communities;

AND WHEREAS BC Hydro owns a significant percentage of the streetlights under the 1701 designation, especially in smaller communities, which is preventing those communities from being able to address their carbon footprint by changing to LED streetlights:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM request the provincial government to make the necessary changes to BC Hydro to allow all communities to reach locally appropriate solutions to switch BC Hydro owned streetlights to LED lights.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Energy and Mines**

BC Hydro is currently piloting LED technology with a goal of better understanding the potential energy and maintenance savings from the technology. The results of the pilot are expected in spring 2016.

BC Hydro will be reviewing its street lighting rates, including potential LED rates, as part of the 2015 Rate Design Application (RDA). This application is scheduled for submission to the BC Utilities Commission in summer 2015.

**B97 Extended Producer Responsibility for Mattresses**

WHEREAS the Province is transitioning responsibility for end-of-life management of goods to industry through the use of product stewardship program as governed by the BC Ministry of Environment Recycling Regulation;

AND WHEREAS there is currently no product stewardship program for used mattresses and improperly discarded mattresses have to be disposed of by local government at taxpayers expense:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM request the provincial government to require industry to develop a product stewardship program to adequately address end-of-life management of waste mattresses.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Environment**

The Ministry of Environment supports UBCM's request to include waste mattresses under future product stewardship programs to ensure the costs associated with managing these commonly discarded products are transferred to the producers responsible.

In fact, the Ministry has committed to meeting the targets set out in the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment's (CCME) Canada-wide Action Plan for Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) programs – including those for construction and demolition materials, furniture (including mattresses, hide-a-beds, etc.), textiles, carpets and appliances by 2017. BC continues to lead all jurisdictions in this regard.

Continued efforts in the Lower Mainland to collect and recycle these items are encouraged as they will not only support waste diversion, but will help establish this industry as a proven entity and inform future consultations regarding the upcoming EPR program for mattresses.

**B98 Elected Officials Coverage Under *Workers Compensation Act***

WHEREAS all duly elected council and regional board members are not considered workers or employers and are therefore not covered under the *Workers Compensation Act* in their capacity as elected officials;

AND WHEREAS the Personal Optional Protection Insurance is not available to elected officials;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Province of British Columbia review the *Workers Compensation Act* in consultation with local governments and make the necessary amendments to include all duly elected council or board members in the definition of "worker."

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training, and Minister Responsible for Labour**

The Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training, Minister Responsible for Labour, is responsible for WorkSafeBC and the *Workers Compensation Act*, and takes the safety of all workers in British Columbia most seriously. Government and WorkSafeBC have recently taken action to address bullying and harassment in the workplace. Action is also being taken to fully implement all of the recommendations of Gord Macatee, WorkSafeBC Administrator, to improve workplace health and safety in BC, in accordance with his WorkSafeBC Review and Action Plan released in July, 2014.

Government and WorkSafeBC recognize the importance of the health and safety of all British Columbians who are active in both the private and public sectors of the economy. Citing the authority of sections 1 and 2 of the *Workers Compensation Act*, which includes the definition of a worker, the WorkSafeBC Assessment Manual states that elected officials (e.g., provincial/municipal government, school or library boards, etc.) are not considered workers or employers under the Act and are therefore not covered under the *Workers Compensation Act* in their capacity as elected officials. Personal Optional Protection is not available to these individuals.

Municipalities do have the option of purchasing insurance coverage for their elected officials from private sector insurance carriers. The Union of British Columbia Municipalities may wish to investigate this option further to determine insurance rates and options for group coverage.

Government does not have plans at this time to amend the *Workers Compensation Act* to provide worker coverage to elected officials.

**B102 Parking Enforcement in Rural Areas**

WHEREAS the RCMP are responsible for enforcing parking regulations in rural areas;

AND WHEREAS the process required to ticket and/or tow parking offenders is time consuming and takes policing resources away from other priorities:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that regional districts be granted the authority to enforce parking regulations within their boundaries.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure**

Currently the *Motor Vehicle Act* provides municipalities with the authority to enforce parking regulations within their boundaries. The same authority is not provided to regional districts. Research is required to understand the basis for the difference and determine whether there were any specific reasons for excluding the regional districts when the original legislation was enacted. Based upon the research, further consultation and policy analysis may be required before considering the change.

**B103 Equitable Penalty & Sentencing Powers for Regional Districts**

WHEREAS Section 263 of the *Community Charter* provides municipalities with the power to set minimum fines and the power to set maximum fines up to $10,000;

AND WHEREAS there is no corresponding provision in the *Local Government Act* to provide regional districts with the same powers:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Province of BC enact an amendment to the *Local Government Act* to provide regional districts with the power to set minimum fines and the power to set maximum fines up to $10,000.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development**

Regional districts' authority to set fines and penalties are generally consistent with those provided to municipalities under the *Community Charter*. Under the *Local Government Act* regional districts have authority to establish penalties or fines for the purposes of enforcing bylaws. The Ministry notes that municipalities do have the power to set maximum fines up to $10,000 in relation an offence in a prosecution under the *Offence Act* whereas regional district authority is set at a maximum of $2,000 for such prosecutions.

Regional district bylaw enforcement powers were not reviewed when the *Community Charter* was brought in. Should there be an opportunity to review regional district bylaw enforcement powers in the future, the Ministry will consider further aligning regional districts' penalty setting powers with those specified in the *Community Charter*.

**B104 Absence of Director Due to Illness**

WHEREAS the role of an Electoral Area Director in electoral area and regional district decision-making is absolutely vital;

AND WHEREAS the current legislation is severely lacking when the absence of the director is due to illness or injury:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM petition the Province of British Columbia to provide clearer legislation that establishes respectful, reasonable and responsible guidance as to how Electoral Area Directors and regional districts are to manage extended absences by Electoral Area Directors due to illness or injury.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural**

Alternate Electoral Area Directors are appointed by Electoral Area Directors to act in place of a director during the Director's absence and have all of the authority of the Director, including voting at the board table and participating fully in discussions and decisions. In 2012, as a result of the Regional District Task Force recommendations, the *Local Government Act* was amended to require that Electoral Area Directors appoint an alternate within 60 days of an Electoral Area Elector being elected. Further, the *Local Government Act* was also amended to provide the board with the authority to appoint an alternate if the Electoral Area Director failed to do so.

The Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development is interested in ensuring that the regional district legislative framework works effectively and is committed to working with those in the regional district system to improve board operations. The Ministry is open to hearing about specific challenges regional districts have experienced while managing an extended absence due to illness or injury so that it can better understand the issue and determine how to address it.

**B106 Port Improvements Tax Exemption**

WHEREAS the Port Improvements (Berth Corridor) Tax Exemption Regulation, BC Reg. 198/2004 exempts berth corridor improvements including breakwaters, crane rails on wharves or piers, docks including caissons and rock mattresses, dolphins floats, jetties, piers, wharves, and specified piles from property taxation in specified circumstances;

AND WHEREAS this berth corridor taxation exemption interferes with the ability of: local governments with ports to access adequate financial resources to support community needs, contrary to Section 1(2)(s) of the *Community Charter*; and local governments to determine the appropriate level of local government taxation, contrary to Section 1(2)(d) of the *Community Charter*.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the provincial government repeal the Port Improvements (Berth Corridor) Tax Exemption Regulation in the fall of 2014.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development**

Privately-owned facilities, docks, wharves and berths are included in the taxable assessed value and full municipal taxes are paid. Berth corridors are the docking portion of break bulk and container terminals at port facilities. Port Authorities administer property owned by the Government of Canada. Port Authorities typically do not lease the berth corridors to the terminal operators; instead, they allow the operators to use the berth corridors through an operating agreement. Historically, because of these operating agreements, berth corridors were exempt from property taxation.

Until the early 2000s, all federally-owned port lands, including berth corridors, were exempt from taxation and were excluded from calculation of Grants in Lieu of Taxes by the *Federal Payments in Lieu of Taxes Act*. Municipalities did not realize property tax revenue from these properties.

In 2002, the British Columbia Assessment Authority (BCA) began interpreting these arrangements as taxable occupation and began assessing the berth corridors at break bulk and container facilities and placing them on the assessment roll as taxable property.

The *Ports Property Tax Act* (PPTA) was created in 2004 in response to concerns from marine terminal operators that rising and uncertain municipal taxes on industrial land were impeding investments and putting BC port terminals at a competitive disadvantage. Legislation introduced by the Province also made changes to exempt from taxation berth corridors owned by the Government of Canada but taxably occupied.

The Province is naturally very reluctant to impinge on municipal tax freedom. However, BC is Canada's Pacific Gateway and transportation is a key support for economic growth and development. That's why transportation is singled out for special focus in the BC Jobs Plan. More than any other sector, it serves the dual purpose of generating direct employment and underpinning job creation, development and progress throughout BC.

It is in the provincial interest to maintain the competitive nature of container ports and this exemption is consistent with treatment of similar infrastructure in the United States and Eastern

Canada. The Province is not considering repealing the Port Improvements (Berth Corridor) Tax Exemption at this time.

**B107 Liquid Natural Gas Development**

WHEREAS liquid natural gas (LNG) development in northeastern BC and proposed pipelines, terminal facilities, and tanker transportation from the north coast will have large, cumulative environmental, social and economic impacts;

AND WHEREAS this development is happening across BC impacting the land and communities of northern BC both civic and First Nation, without the means of meaningful consultation and involvement;

AND WHEREAS comprehensive planning and cumulative impact assessment have been lacking to date:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM request that the Province of BC and First Nations convene and co-chair a strategic economic and environmental impact assessment of LNG development in British Columbia;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that UBCM request that the Province and First Nations invite the federal government to participate in this joint planning process.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Natural Gas Development and Minister Responsible for Housing**

The Province has recognized the desire of British Columbia communities, Aboriginal groups and other stakeholders to understand the cumulative economic and environmental impacts of LNG development. In response, the Environmental Assessment Office set out a strategic approach for review of these projects, which included early identification and resolution of strategic and operational policy issues across government; coordination of regional forums, open houses, working group meetings; and a seamless approach to the regulatory regime.

The Environmental Assessment Office has worked with the Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development to develop a Social and Economic Effects Management Framework to support identification and mitigation of community level service and infrastructure effects arising from the construction of LNG projects and provide opportunities for monitoring, reporting and ongoing engagement with directly affected parties.

The Province is leading the development of the Environmental Stewardship Initiative. The Initiative proposes to bring together First Nations, the provincial and federal governments and LNG proponents to collaborate on projects related to cumulative effects, environmental monitoring, habitat restoration and research.

**B108 BC Hydro & Independent Power Producers**

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM ask the provincial government to create legislation that will address the huge utility rates paid to independent power producers to allow the Province the ability to purchase electricity from the open North American market, in the same manner as previously, if those rates are competitive;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the provincial government take action through legislation that would permit BC Hydro to produce power from existing public facilities as opposed to forcing it to buy expensive power from independent power producers at rates higher than BC Hydro's;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that all independent power producers contracts that have yet to be built be frozen;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the BC Utilities Commission investigate and produce a position on the impacts of independent power producers on businesses, residents and non-profits of British Columbia.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Energy and Mines**

Electricity purchase agreements (EPAs) with independent power producers (IPPs) ensure that BC Hydro will have clean, reliable power at predictable prices for the long term. New power projects are expensive compared to projects built decades ago, whether built by BC Hydro or IPPs.

BC Hydro does purchase energy in the US and Alberta markets during low water years and to store for later re-sale at a profit, which creates ratepayer benefits.

IPPs currently account for about 25 percent of BC Hydro's domestic supply and will provide a large portion of power needs over the next several years. BC Hydro has signed legally binding contracts with IPPs and does not plan to abrogate its commitments. IPP projects add value for BC Hydro ratepayers by shifting project development, financing and operating risk to the private sector.

The incremental cost of IPPs equates to approximately 0.2 percent of the 15.6 percent cumulative 2015/2016 BC Hydro rate increase.

BC Hydro has EPAs with some UBCM members (e.g., Capital Regional District; City of Nanaimo). Local governments continue to benefit from the tax revenues provided by IPP projects.

BC Hydro has been working with some IPP developers with pre-operational EPAs awarded as part of BC Hydro calls to cancel, defer or downsize projects due to BC Hydro's current energy surplus.

Currently, BC Hydro's procurement of energy from IPPs is limited to the Standing Offer Program, which is limited to projects with a capacity of up to 15 MW. Any EPAs that BC Hydro enters into are cost-effective compared to viable alternatives.

**B109 Property Reclassification of Medical Marihuana Production Facilities**

WHEREAS land used for the commercial production of medical marihuana may qualify for farm classification under the Assessment Act;

AND WHEREAS the commercial production of medical marihuana may occur in commercial and industrial zones;

AND WHEREAS the assessment value of farmland can be significantly lower than assessment values for other property classifications;

AND WHEREAS this could have a significant effect on property tax revenue for local governments;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the provincial government be requested to amend the *Assessment Act* and its respective regulations to preclude the commercial production of medical marihuana from qualifying for farm classification.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development**

Medical marihuana is an emerging industry in Canada following the new Health Canada regulations that took effect April 1, 2014.

Government has made a decision that medical marihuana, and any other federally-regulated narcotic, is not eligible for farm classification for property tax purposes.

Government is taking a balanced approach which takes into consideration the nature of the operation and is consistent with the taxation approach being taken in Alberta.

Local governments have expressed concern about providing these facilities with farm class, which may result in loss of property tax revenue, and government has listened. This decision will ensure local governments do not lose potential property tax revenues from this new emerging industry.

**B110 Classification Split on Accommodation Hotels**

WHEREAS BC Assessment in 2007 introduced a new classification methodology that permitted "strata accommodation properties" to be split-classified between Class 6 and Class 1 – residential to reflect a dual use of these properties (personal residential and commercial use);

AND WHEREAS the re-assessment of certain properties, which continue to be zoned for commercial uses only, has significantly reduced the tax base of smaller tourist based communities throughout BC which planned in accordance to the proposed uses and commercial land base within their OCPs, tax and budget forecast:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Government of BC review its methodology for split classification in cases where the zoning precludes residential uses as a permitted use.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development**

Government understands that the issue of split classification for strata accommodation properties (SAPs) has ramifications for some small resort municipalities in terms of revenues from property taxation. There is a fine line between not overburdening taxpayers and ensuring local governments have the resources they need to meet service requirements.

In this case, however, a 15-year old issue was resolved after significant consultations and the legislative changes have only been in place for six years.

Changes to this methodology would require consultations and legislative amendments. Although government will continue to work with local governments to address concerns regarding the classification of SAPs, government is not considering any further legislative changes at this time.

**B111 Rural BC Assessment**

WHEREAS limited and infrequent property sales may not accurately reflect market values in many rural areas of British Columbia;

AND WHEREAS the BC Assessment Authority is legislated to use mandated formulas based on market data when assessing residential properties, and this has historically contributed to significant shifts in the assessed values of properties in some rural communities:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM urge the provincial government to provide the BC Assessment Authority with more flexibility when assessing properties in rural British Columbia.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development**

Market value assessment is widely considered to be the fairest system for distributing the property tax burden.

The real estate market is the single biggest influence on market values. In addition, when establishing the market value for a particular property, BC Assessment (BCA) considers each property's unique characteristics, including size, layout, shape, age, finish, quality, number of carports, garages, sundecks as well as the condition of buildings. Services in the area, location, views and neighbourhood may also influence a property's market value.

Government appreciates that limited and infrequent property real estate sales data may impact assessments of some rural properties. However, maintaining market value as the basis for determining assessed value assures long term fairness and consistency. It is also important therefore, that property owners initiate discussions with BCA regarding any concerns with their annual assessments and access the property assessment appeal process if they are not satisfied.

**B112 Farm Assessment**

WHEREAS the *Assessment Act* allows land with commercial or industrial zoning to be classified as farm for assessment and taxation purposes;

AND WHEREAS inequities between property owners may result because farm land is assessed at a significantly lower rate than commercial or industrial land:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Union of BC Municipalities request that the provincial government amend the *Assessment Act* or associated regulation, as appropriate, so that land cannot be reclassified as farm if the lands are zoned for commercial, industrial or business purpose unless the farm use pre-dates the zoning, is the principal use, and the lands are continuously used for farm purposes.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development**

BC Assessment (BCA) works independently from taxing authorities and under the *Assessment Act,* BCA is required to classify property according to its actual use not its zoning.

Government appreciates that the application of the Classification of Land as a Farm Regulation, under the *Assessment Act,* may result in property that is zoned by a local government for another use (e.g., commercial or industrial) being classified as farm. Although BCA will take zoning into consideration, the regulation will prevail. This inconsistency might lead to revenue impacts for some local governments.

Local governments however, have the authority under the *Community Charter* and *Local Government Act* to enforce zoning bylaws to manage the activities on land.

Government is not considering any legislative changes at this time.

**B113 Marihuana Production on Agricultural Lands**

WHEREAS the Province, through BC Assessment, regards medical marihuana production as a 'farm use' for assessment purposes;
AND WHEREAS the Province, through the *Agricultural Land Commission Act* and *Farm Practices Protection (Right to Farm) Act*, includes medical marihuana production as a 'farm use';

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM request the Province amend legislation and regulations in order to remove the production of medical marihuana as a 'farm use' in terms of taxation assessment;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that UBCM request the Province amend legislation and regulations in order to allow communities to regulate the production of medical marihuana within the Agricultural Land Reserve through land use planning provisions provided in the *Local Government Act*.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development**

The Province of British Columbia considers that the production of medical marihuana on Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) lands is an allowable farm use and that local governments have the authority to regulate, but not prohibit medical marihuana production on ALR lands.

The Ministry of Agriculture is in the process of developing Minister's Bylaw Standards to guide local government bylaw development for medical marihuana production facilities in the ALR. Once stakeholder input on a discussion paper has been reviewed, by the end of 2014, the Minister will consider establishing Bylaw Standards. If established, the new provisions will be incorporated into the Ministry of Agriculture's Guide for Bylaw Development in Farming Areas.

For the purposes of assessment, the Province has amended the Classification of Land as a Farm Regulation to expressly exclude the production of marihuana for medicinal purposes as a qualifying agricultural use. Medical marihuana production facilities will not be eligible for farm classification.

The Government of Canada's Marihuana for Medical Purposes Regulations allow for the development of licensed production facilities on both provincial ALR and non-ALR lands. The Health Canada website states that "Licensed producers must comply with all federal, provincial/territorial and municipal laws and by-laws, including municipal zoning by-laws." For more information, see www.hc-sc.gc.ca/dhp-mps/marihuana/info/faq-eng.php.

**B115 Secondary Dwellings**

WHEREAS the smaller working farms in British Columbia have been struggling financially because of numerous changes in provincial legislation, a large increase in land values, an aging generation of farmers, as well as other hardships;

AND WHEREAS allowing a permanent second residence and existing second residences to be used by family members, retiring farmers who want to remain on the farm, or renters for an additional source of income and to help smaller farms remain in operation:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM urge the Ministry of Agriculture and the Agricultural Land Commission to allow a permanent second residence to a maximum size of 2,000 square feet within a "home plate" footprint and away from viable farmland to help supplement farm income and/or to provide accommodations for aging family members.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Agriculture**

The *Agricultural Land Commission Act* (*ALCA*) sets out the structure and operations of the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) and identifies permissible land uses within the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR). The Agricultural Land Reserve Use, Subdivision and Procedure Regulation (ALR Regulation) provides greater specificity to many of the provisions in the *ALCA*. The current provision for secondary housing on ALR is within the *ALCA*, ALR Regulation, Section 3 (1) (b) (i) and (ii). It states that for each parcel, one secondary suite within a single family dwelling and one manufactured home, up to 9m in width, for use by a member of the owner's immediate family, are permitted uses of land in the ALR.

In July 2014 a consultation was conducted on proposed additional activities that could be allowed on farmland in the ALR without a requirement to make an application to the ALC; on whether, and to what extent, these allowable uses should vary between different regions of the province; and on what parameters should be put around the proposed new uses.

Question 11 of the consultation raised the issue of *intergenerational transfer of an active farm or ranch operation*. Allowing "life estate leases" for intergenerational transfer would allow retiring farmers to continue to live on their property while leasing or selling it to their children or other new entrants. The lease could allow a second residence to be established on the property, but no permanent subdivision of property would be involved.

The results of the consultation process are currently being analyzed. Any changes to the Regulation will be made public when the analysis is complete.

**B116 *Mines Act* Alignment with Official Community Plans**

WHEREAS the provincial *Mines Act* governs the issuance of permits relative to the mining and extraction of natural resources across the province without first having a permit applicant confirm local government support for such activity;

AND WHEREAS local governments may have established official community plans designating specific areas for such mining and extraction of natural resources:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM prevail upon the provincial government to amend the *Mines Act* to first require a mines permit applicant to confirm such mining activity is within an area designated by a local official community plan permitting such mining activity.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Energy and Mines**

The Province of British Columbia is committed to working with local governments across BC to find solutions to issues related to mining activities. The Ministry's referral process for Notice of Work application proposals includes providing local governments the opportunity to review and provide comments.

Mining is important to the BC economy – whether mining aggregate to build our roads, hospitals and homes or exploring for sub-surface mineral and coal resources. This sector provides employment in communities throughout British Columbia and appropriate development of our resources is key to the provincial economy.

**B117 Ownership of Abandoned Rail Corridors**

WHEREAS transportation corridors are vital to the transportation of goods and people throughout the province;

AND WHEREAS some corridors are being abandoned, especially some rail corridors;

AND WHEREAS these abandoned rail corridors can become vital and valuable corridors for recreational uses such as hiking, cycling, skiing and snowshoeing;

AND WHEREAS these corridors should be open to all residents of BC:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the provincial government facilitate public acquisition and ownership of abandoned transportation corridors;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Province work with UBCM to develop a funding mechanism – for example, a province-wide parcel tax similar to the Municipal Finance Authority tax – to assist governments or community groups to purchase and maintain abandoned transportation corridors for public recreational use.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations**

The Province of British Columbia has acquired over 2000 km of former rail corridors for transportation, utility transmission or recreation purposes. The Province evaluates each corridor for potential acquisition as part of the federally regulated abandonment process.

Where the Province declines to acquire abandoned rail corridors for public purposes and where communities want to acquire the corridor, the Province will consider opportunities to work with local governments to explore options for acquisition.

The Ministry is committed to the development of a world-renowned network of recreation trails and continues to support regional and local trail development through implementation of the Trails Strategy for BC.

**B118 Funding Assistance for Project Proposal Evaluation**

WHEREAS North Coastal British Columbia is experiencing a large volume of industrial development project proposals;

AND WHEREAS small communities do not have the financial capacity to sufficiently evaluate the positive and negative impacts to the area of such project proposals:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Province provide funding assistance to communities to help evaluate large scale industrial project proposals.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development**

In the spring of 2014, the Minister of Community, Sport and Cultural Development announced over $1 million in direct planning and assessment funding to six communities in the North West to help identify and assess the impacts from the rapid industrial development underway in that region. Additionally, significant staff resources from various ministries have been focused on the region to help ensure communities are well positioned to take advantage of this development and to help ensure they have access to the information and resources they need. This includes a dedicated staff member from the Ministry solely focused on supporting community planning in the North West.

**B119 Municipalities With No Resident**

WHEREAS the Jumbo Glacier Mountain Resort Municipality (JGMRM) has no residents, no taxable assessment, and an appointed council;

AND WHEREAS the draft JGMRM five year financial plan shows $1 million of Provincial grant funding sustaining their operations for the next five years;

AND WHEREAS the Association of Kootenay and Boundary Local Governments (AKBLG) is working on a shoe string budget to assist elected local government within the Kootenay and Boundary regions of British Columbia;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the UBCM inform the Province of British Columbia that it is strongly opposed to the funding of any municipalities without residents.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development**

A key objective in incorporating the Jumbo Glacier Mountain Resort Municipality was to provide for a council that can undertake the necessary planning and regulation to ensure provision of the services and amenities necessary for a successful resort and community.

The provincial grant enables the council to have a degree of independence from the proponent as it develops a planning and regulatory framework for the development of the resort.

The *Local Government Grants Act* makes the mountain resort municipality eligible for a Small Community Grant. Regulation 332/95, http://www.bclaws.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/221_95, under the Act, determines the amount of money to which the Mountain Resort Municipality is entitled, which this year was $200,000 in 2014.

**B120 Lease Agreements with Provincial Government**

WHEREAS there are circumstances where local government requires a lease agreement with the Province of British Columbia;

AND WHEREAS the provincial government has a standard agreement which is very one sided for the Province and local governments are left with a "take it or leave it" situation it makes it very difficult to protect the interests of the local government (for example, the lease agreement might not allow for an escape clause for the local government):

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM work with the Province of British Columbia to produce lease agreements which would be fair for both the provincial government and local government.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Technology, Innovation and Citizen's Services**

Shared Services BC (SSBC), representing the Province of British Columbia, negotiates with property owners utilizing a standard lease document. This document seeks to provide the flexibility and financial value required by the government in order to meet the needs of the citizens of British Columbia.

SSBC would welcome the opportunity to meet with representatives of UBCM to discuss lease agreements between the Province and local governments so that each party may gain a clearer understanding of the requirements of the other.

**B122 National Park in the South Okanagan-Similkameen**

WHEREAS a proposed national park in the South Okanagan-Similkameen would protect more species at risk, more endangered habitat types, and encompasses a greater diversity of ecosystems than any national park in Canada;

AND WHEREAS a national park in the South Okanagan-Similkameen would play an important role in British Columbia's economy as a substantial and recurring source of economic stimulus particularly through tourism, a source of increased community economic development and new investment, and would provide over 500 new, permanent jobs;

AND WHEREAS many governing bodies, such as five regional districts, the BC Chamber of Commerce, the Thompson Okanagan Tourism Association, and local First Nations, have passed formal resolutions asking the Province of British Columbia to return to national park discussions with the Government of Canada;

AND WHEREAS the federal government has waited for the provincial government to follow the recommendation of the steering committee and take the next step toward bringing the economic benefits of the proposed national park to British Columbians:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the provincial government sign an agreement with the Government of Canada to continue to formal discussions regarding a proposed South Okanagan-Similkameen National Park.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Environment**

The Ministry of Environment does not support a national park reserve for the South Okanagan at this time. That said, there are a variety of tools to ensure the protection of significant geographic and cultural values, while also providing recreation and tourism opportunities.

The Ministry understands the importance of protecting these values, while also preserving long-standing economic and culturally-significant activities such as hunting and fishing. The Ministry is always open to working with various groups in the region to discuss protection of environmentally important areas and furthering recreation and tourism objectives.

The Ministry followed through on its commitment to meet with local officials and First nations on this issue in November 2014.

**B124 Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Disaster**

WHEREAS the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear disaster of March 11, 2011 resulted in the catastrophic failure of three nuclear reactors and associated fuel rod storage pools causing the release of significant amounts of radionuclide contamination into the atmospheric and marine environments; and the owners of the Daiichi facility (TEPCO) and the Japanese government have not been able to contain the marine and atmospheric radionuclide contamination originating from the failed Fukushima Daiichi facility;

AND WHEREAS the 80% of British Columbians who live within 10 miles of the Pacific Ocean, as well as the wide variety of marine and coastal economic stakeholders who rely on ocean and coastal environments deserve to have access to detailed information regarding possible radionuclide contamination associated with the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear disaster:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM support those British Columbians who are affected by the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear disaster by calling on the Province of British Columbia and the Government of Canada to immediately enact the following:

- convene a panel of institutional and citizen scientists to determine what type and frequency of marine and atmospheric monitoring is required to maintain clear understanding of the environmental impacts of the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Disaster on coastal British Columbia;
- determine the locations where a comprehensive network of marine and terrestrial sensors or other monitoring methodologies will be maintained;
- commission a website that would both list the raw findings of sensor and environment testing and interpret these data in a clear and transparent manner; and
- open negotiations directly with the government of Japan regarding both the accelerated containment of radionuclide contamination, and full financial support of the cost of the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Disaster Monitoring Program on the west coast of BC and Canada.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Environment**

The Ministry of Environment understands the concerns related to the Japanese nuclear disaster and hopes the following information provides assurance that there is no risk to public health in BC based on the results of ongoing monitoring that has been taking place since the incident on March 10, 2011.

The issue of monitoring and responding to radiation falls under the jurisdiction of the Government of Canada, which is monitoring and assessing any potential threats to the health and safety of Canadians. These include the following:

1. **Health Canada** is the Government of Canada's lead agency on the impact to human health from potential radiation exposure. To learn more, please visit Health Canada's website at: http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hc-ps/ed-ud/respond/nuclea/2011-03-17-eng.php. In addition, Health Canada's Radiation Protection Bureau provides scientific advice on radiation. For more information, please visit their website at: http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/ahc-asc/branch-dirgen/hecs-dgsesc/sep-psm/rpb-br-eng.php;

2. **The Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission (CNSC),** along with regulatory authorities in Canada are conducting regular radiation surveillance and monitoring radiation activities. Please visit the CNSC website for more information at: http://www.nuclearsafety.gc.ca/eng/mediacentre/updates/2011/japan-earthquake/march-23-2011-japan-earthquake-radiation-dose-rates-in-canada.cfm;

3. **The Canadian Food Inspection Agency** tested radiation levels of seafood that may have been impacted by the radiation leak, including imported fish and edible marine products, such as seaweed. Results of all the test samples were below Health Canada's action levels for radionuclides. These results can be found online at http://www.inspection.gc.ca/food/imports/japan-nuclear-crisis/eng/1384447285082/1384448940388

Radiation from the Fukushima nuclear reactor is not considered a risk to BC's shores, nevertheless, regular monitoring continues along the coast. According to Health Canada, since the marine debris was generated and dispersed offshore several days prior to the Fukushima nuclear reactor plant leak, contamination from radiation is very unlikely as is radiation risk to marine species and ecosystems in BC. Testing conducted in BC and Washington State found no evidence of radiation in debris, including testing on a small fishing vessel, which was the first piece of debris confirmed to have come from the Fukushima prefecture. Further information can be found at http://env.gov.bc.ca/epd/tsunami-debris/pdf/Assessment-of-Radiation-Risk-in-Tsunami-Debris.pdf and at: http://www.bccdc.ca/healthenv/Radiation/JapanFAQ/default.htm.

In BC, exposure to radiation by people and communities causing health impacts falls under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Health. Contact information for the Ministry of Health is available on their website at: http://www.health.gov.bc.ca/protect/contacts.html.

The Ministry hopes this information has been useful and serves to both inform and address some of the concerns. If you have remaining questions, please contact the federal agencies responsible for both environmental monitoring and for responding to radiation emergencies in Canada (listed above).

**B127 Westray Criminal Code Amendments**

WHEREAS the Westray amendments to the *Criminal Code* were brought forward to address incidents of workplace death or injury that were determined to be caused by negligence or a failure to take reasonable steps to ensure safety:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM urge the provincial government, specifically the Attorney General and the Minister of Labour, to ensure that:

Crown attorneys are educated, trained and directed to apply the Westray amendments;
dedicated prosecutors are given the responsibility for health and safety fatalities;
police are educated, trained and directed to apply the Westray amendments; and
there is greater coordination among regulators, police and Crown attorneys so that health and safety regulators are trained to reach out to police when there is a possibility that Westray amendment charges are warranted.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Justice**

The Ministry of Justice appreciates the serious nature of workplace fatalities.

When reports to Crown Counsel are submitted to the Ministry's Criminal Justice Branch alleging death or serious injury arising out of a workplace incident, they are generally assigned for charge assessment to senior prosecutors who are familiar with the Westray amendments to the *Criminal Code of Canada* and have particular expertise in Occupational Health and Safety matters.

Investigative agencies, including those that investigate workplace fatalities, are free to contact, (and often do), the Criminal Justice Branch during the course of an investigation and seek legal advice. The Branch does not, and cannot lawfully direct how an investigation must be conducted, who should be investigated, or the alleged offences that should be investigated. Investigative agencies are independent of the Branch and the Branch does not stand in oversight of police or other investigators in the exercise of their discretion. However, the Criminal Justice Branch can provide legal advice that assists in gathering evidence in a manner that is respectful of *Charter of Rights and Freedom* rights and identifies, for investigators, any additional evidence that may be needed for the purpose of charge assessment.

Recently, WorkSafeBC entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Criminal Justice Branch to improve communication and interaction between the investigative and prosecution agency. This MOU addresses best practices in the preparation of a report to Crown Counsel, as well as the disclosure of information between the two organizations. The creation of the MOU arose, in part, out of recommendations that were contained within a report entitled the Babine Explosion Investigation, prepared, in February 2014, by the Deputy Minister to the Premier, Mr. John Dyble.

On the issue of policing, the Province provides overall direction respecting police services and ensures there are adequate and effective levels of policing. Police agencies conduct individual investigations at arm's length from government and we cannot interfere with or direct police in particular investigations.

The Ministry has facilitated the completion of an updated MOU to establish a cooperative agreement between WorkSafeBC and police to ensure that the investigation of any work related death or injury is conducted in a thorough, timely and effective manner. Enhanced training for police and WorkSafeBC investigators is included in the MOU.

Ministry staff is also facilitating the creation of a second MOU between the Chief Inspector of Mines and police. Agreement has been reached that training, as contained within the WorkSafeBC/police MOU, would also be contained within this MOU.

**B128 Priority Phone Service Restoration**

WHEREAS access to telephone service is critical during medical emergencies;

AND WHEREAS priority must be given to rural residents living outside of cell phone coverage areas when service to telephone land lines is disrupted, as this is their only means of contacting emergency services:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM request the provincial and federal governments to require that telephone service providers restore service to those customers without access to cell phone coverage on an emergency basis, in the event of a telephone service disruption.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Technology, Innovation and Citizens' Services**

The provincial government supports the rapid restoral of services during unplanned service outages and recognizes the importance of reliable telephone and telecommunications services to all citizens.

The regulation of telecommunications services is a federal jurisdiction. Telephone services are regulated under the *Telecommunications Act*, which is administered by the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC).

Stephen B. Simpson is the Commissioner representing British Columbia and Yukon at the CRTC. He may be contacted through the British Columbia Regional Office of the CRTC at: http://www.crtc.gc.ca/eng/offices.htm

**B130 Utilization of the Community Paramedicine Model for Ambulatory Service**

WHEREAS Community Paramedicine is the practice that represents the intersection of health care, public health, and public safety to promote optimal quality of life;

AND WHEREAS this Community Paramedicine model has the potential to prevent and reduce high cost medical treatment:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM request the BC government and BC Emergency Health Services (BCEHS) to research the Community Paramedicine Model of health care for use in all of rural and remote BC communities;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that UBCM request of the BC government and BCEHS that paramedics of the BC Ambulance Service be employed full time to deliver the paramedicine model of health to rural and remote BC communities.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Health, BC Emergency Health Services**

The Ministry of Health supports the resolution that the BC government and BC Emergency Health Services (BCEHS) research the community paramedicine model of health care for use across all rural and remote communities in British Columbia.

The Ministry recognizes the importance of access to health services for all British Columbians, and understands that concerns around appropriate and timely access to these services are of issue to many residents in our rural and remote communities. For this reason, the Ministry provides funds to a wide range of programs to address these challenges.

One of the newer investments by the Province is the BCEHS Community Paramedicine program in which the Ministry of Health committed to an additional 80 full-time equivalent paramedic positions throughout the Province over the next five years to help develop community paramedicine programs in BC's rural communities.

BCEHS will be engaging with health authorities and other partners over the next few months to determine how community paramedicine may provide value with an initial roll out in the spring of 2015.

**B131 Smoking & E-cigarettes**

WHEREAS the introduction of new smoking products that include electronic cigarettes, cigars, cigarillos and pipes, as well as cartridges of nicotine solutions and related products are regulated by Health Canada under the *Food and Drugs Act*, and that the sale of these products are not authorized in Canada;

AND WHEREAS, due to the lack of scientific research, the long-term effects of electronic cigarettes and all related products that include nicotine solutions are not known:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the provincial government regulate the use and sale of electronic cigarettes and other vaporizing systems intended to replicate the smoking experience under the British Columbia *Tobacco Control Act* and Regulations.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Health**

British Columbia's *Tobacco Control Act* does not apply to electronic smoking products as they do not contain tobacco. However, on June 10, 2014, the Premier included the issue of regulating electronic smoking products in a mandate letter to the Minister of Health:

"Your mandate for the following year is as follows:
[...]

12. Work with the federal government to regulate the sale of e-cigarettes and flavoured tobacco to minors in British Columbia, or in the absence of a federal strategy, move to introduce legislation."

Please see the link for the letter http://www.gov.bc.ca/premier/cabinet_ministers/terry_lake_mandate_letter.pdf. BC is also working with the federal government on these issues.

The Ministry of Health will work toward the goal outlined in the Minister's mandate letter.

**B132 Shortage of Physicians & Specialists in BC**

WHEREAS there is a shortage of physicians and medical specialists in British Columbia;
AND WHEREAS the Province of BC is recruiting physicians and medical specialists from other countries to practice in British Columbia to address this shortage:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM encourage the Province of British Columbia and the BC College of Physicians and Surgeons to allow Canadian students who have obtained a medical degree outside of Canada to do their clinical residency and practice in British Columbia.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Health**

Between 2001/02 and 2012/13, the number of physicians in BC grew by 29 percent while the BC population grew by 13.4 percent. There are 236 physicians per 100,000 people in BC and this is third highest in Canada behind Nova Scotia (263 per 100,000 people) and Newfoundland & Labrador (260 per 100,000 people).

Canadians Studying Abroad (CSAs) are considered International Medical Graduates (IMGs) based on where they graduate from medical school. Medical school graduates from outside Canada can apply to become medical residents in BC. Because international medical education varies widely, abilities of all IMGs cannot be assumed and, therefore, must be demonstrated in qualifying rounds of assessment. To ensure patient safety, this evaluation process is thorough and time intensive.

The Ministry is committed to improving access for IMGs. BC and the Medical Council of Canada have made the following policy changes to enable IMG access to Post Graduate Medical Education (PGME) in BC:

1) The Medical Council of Canada recently agreed to allow IMGs to write the Medical Council of Canada Evaluating Examination in their penultimate year, 20 months prior to graduation from medical school;
2) The Medical Council of Canada agreed to administer the National Assessment Collaboration Objective Structured Clinical Exam (NAC OSCE) twice a year in BC starting in 2013 with a spring and fall sitting. This doubles the number of IMGs from 70 to 140 who can take the NAC OSCE and apply to Canadian Residents Matching Service in their final year of medical school; The IMG-BC clinical assessment was reduced from 12 to 8 weeks with a focus on family medicine, the number of positions were increased from 35 to 60, and the assessment is now offered five times a year; and,

3) The number of IMG family medicine residency positions at UBC has been increasing since 2011 with eight new positions each year over five years to an expected 40 new entry-level positions in 2016 for a total of 58 IMG positions. These residency positions are distributed to multiple training sites in BC health authorities.

BC continues to increase the number of residencies and improve the process for IMGs to access PGME.

## C19 Representation on Health Authority Boards

WHEREAS the intent of the 1991 Seaton Commission: Closer to Home was to provide greater public scrutiny and control of health care;

AND WHEREAS the current governance by appointment has created a managerial form of accountability to the Ministry of Health and not to the local communities, as intended:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Ministry of Health be requested to initiate legislative change to require the composition of health authority boards to include representation from regional districts.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Health**

The role of the Ministry of Health is to provide stewardship for the health care system through policies, guidelines and ongoing monitoring and evaluation of health authority performance against defined expectations. Within this framework, regional health authorities are responsible for planning, managing and delivering publicly funded health care services in their jurisdictions to the population which they serve.

At this time, there are no plans to initiate legislative changes to how British Columbia's health authority boards recruit and appoint their members or the compositions of these boards.

## LR1 National Energy Board Public Hearing Process

WHEREAS on 2013 December 16, Kinder Morgan submitted an application to the National Energy Board (NEB) for the Trans Mountain Expansion Project;

AND WHEREAS the NEB made an arbitrary decision on July 15, 2014 to remove from the standard public hearing for a major pipeline project long-standing protocols which provided opportunities for public review through open meetings, oral hearings and cross examination;

AND WHEREAS the loss of the standard public hearing from the application review process constitutes a significant erosion of the democratic rights of provinces, territories, local governments, First Nations and citizens to cross-examine evidence presented, articulate concerns and voice opposition to applications;

AND WHEREAS the loss of all opportunities for intervenors to participate in oral hearing and to cross-examine evidence within the NEB regulatory review process, has broad social, environmental and economic implications that would impact all local governments and their citizens:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM call on the federal government and National Energy Board, through the Federation of Canadian Municipalities and other avenues as appropriate, to oppose the loss of the standard public hearing process from the National Energy Board's application review and tribunal process;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that UBCM call on the provincial and federal governments, through their appropriate and respective roles, to develop, in consultation with local governments, First Nations, and citizens, the restoration of a full public hearing process to the National Energy Board's consideration of all applications.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Justice**

The Province of British Columbia is committed to ensuring that the Trans Mountain Expansion Project, if it does go ahead, satisfies the highest standards of environmental protection and protects British Columbia from financial and environmental risk. Any heavy oil pipeline project must satisfy the Province's five conditions, before British Columbia will consider supporting it.

British Columbia's minimum requirements for any heavy oil pipeline are:

- Successful completion of an environmental assessment;
- Establishment of world-leading marine oil spill response, prevention and recovery systems for British Columbia's coastline and ocean;
- Establishment of world-leading land oil spill prevention, response and recovery systems;
- Legal requirements regarding Aboriginal and treaty rights are addressed and First Nations are provided with the opportunities, information and resources to participate and benefit from the project;
- British Columbia receives a fair share of the fiscal and economic benefits.

This review is being run entirely under the authority of the National Energy Board. The Board sets the process for the reviews it conducts.

The Province is an intervenor in the Board's review of the project and has been actively representing the interests of the people of British Columbia. Intervenors can submit Information Requests, file written evidence, bring motions and submit final arguments. The Province has been reviewing the information that was filed by Kinder Morgan, has filed a first round of information requests and will follow up with a second round of Information Requests in order to obtain the information it requires. The Province has also been meeting regularly with Kinder Morgan to ensure that all aspects of their proposal are understood and to make issues of importance to British Columbians known to the company.

The Province believes that these opportunities are sufficient for the government to evaluate the evidence filed by the proponent, to determine whether it is sufficient to support the application, and to ultimately decide whether this project meets the Province's five conditions.

**LR2 Environmental Assessment of Trans Mountain Expansion Project**

WHEREAS the Environmental Assessment Office of the Province of British Columbia ("the EAO") entered into an Agreement in 2010 with the National Energy Board ("NEB") under which the EAO accepts that the NEB assessment of a pipeline constitutes the equivalent of an assessment under the *British Columbia Environmental Assessment Act;*

AND WHEREAS Trans Mountain's responses to motions filed in early July 2014 by intervenors in the NEB hearing process for the Trans Mountain Expansion Project demonstrate that Trans Mountain is failing to adequately respond to written information requests, which are the only opportunity for intervenors to test and clarify Trans Mountain's evidence;

AND WHEREAS this failure to respond to written information requests means that intervenors are not able to properly prepare their own evidence and participate meaningfully in the assessment process for the Trans Mountain Expansion Project, in contravention of the preamble to the Agreement, which states that any assessment of a project pursuant to the *National Energy Board Act* would take into account any comments submitted during the assessment process by the public and Aboriginal peoples:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the UBCM request that the Province direct the EAO to withdraw formally from the Agreement pursuant to Clause 6 thereof and undertake its own Environmental Assessment process for the Trans Mountain Expansion Project, which should include sufficient opportunity for meaningful participation by all interested British Columbians.

**RESPONSE: Environmental Assessment Office**

The Province of British Columbia is committed to ensuring that the Trans Mountain Expansion Project, if it does go ahead, satisfies the highest standards of environmental protection and protects British Columbia from financial and environmental risk. Any heavy oil pipeline project must satisfy the Province's five conditions before BC will consider supporting it.
BC's five conditions for any heavy oil pipeline are:

- Successful completion of an environmental assessment;
- Establishment of world-leading marine oil spill response, prevention and recovery systems for BC's coastline and ocean;
- Establishment of world-leading land oil spill prevention, response and recovery systems;
- Legal requirements regarding Aboriginal and treaty rights are addressed and First Nations are provided with the opportunities, information and resources to participate and benefit from the project;
- BC receives a fair share of the fiscal and economic benefits.

The Province is an intervenor in the NEB's review of the project and has been actively representing the interests of the people of BC. Intervenors can submit Information Requests, file written evidence, bring motions and submit final arguments. The Province has been reviewing the information that was filed by Kinder Morgan, has filed a first round of information requests and will follow up with a second round of Information Requests in order to obtain the information it requires. The Province has also been meeting regularly with Kinder Morgan to ensure that all aspects of their proposal are understood and to make issues of importance to British Columbians known to the company.

This review is being run entirely under the authority of the National Energy Board. The Board sets the process for the reviews it conducts.

**LR3 Requiring Consequence & Response Capacity Assessment for Sunken or Submerged Diluted Bitumen**

WHEREAS on December 16, 2013, Kinder Morgan submitted an application to the National Energy Board for the Trans Mountain Pipeline Expansion Project to increase the transportation of diluted bitumen via pipeline through British Columbian communities, across more than 700 streams and water-crossings in 12 BC watersheds;

AND WHEREAS diluted bitumen has been shown to submerge and/or sink when spilled into freshwater environments, resulting in prolonged and costly response operations with limited success and negative impacts to local ecosystems, public and environmental health, local economies, and cultural and recreational resources;

AND WHEREAS, as per Trans Mountain's response on July 11, 2014 to intervenors in the NEB hearing, Trans Mountain maintains that in the event of a diluted bitumen spill sunken or submerged oil "would be treated as a post-emergency response function" and declined to provide any specific information about how response plans or equipment stockpiling for the project would address submerged or sunken diluted bitumen, thereby raising serious concerns about the capacity to respond to the risk currently posed to local communities and watersheds by the existing Trans Mountain pipeline:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that, for the protection of communities and ecosystems reliant on the health of watersheds across BC, the Union of BC Municipalities call on the National Energy Board to compel Trans Mountain and all other pipeline operators shipping diluted bitumen, to provide site specific consequence analyses and response plans and tactics for submerged and sunken oil to be subject to public review and approval by impacted communities;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that UBCM call on the provincial government to conduct a full assessment of the response plans, tactics, equipment and capacity currently available within the Province of BC to respond to sunken or submerged oil.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Environment**

The Province of British Columbia shares the City of Vancouver's concern about the potential impacts of diluted bitumen and other oil products on BC's communities and watersheds. BC's five conditions for heavy oil pipelines include requirements for world class spill response in both the marine and terrestrial setting.

The Province is actively scrutinizing the Trans Mountain Pipeline Expansion Project's application to the National Energy Board as an intervenor in the hearing and continues to press the company for more detailed information about their spill response plans and capacity.

The Ministry of Environment also recently conducted a public consultation on an intentions paper outlining a proposed strengthened spill response regime to ensure all spills receive a quick and effective response.

## LR4 Discontinuation of Community Library Training Program

WHEREAS the Community Library Training Program (CLTP) was a distance education model coordinated by the provincial government's Libraries Branch that provided professional training and certification opportunities for public library staff without the burden and expense of having to be away from their community;

AND WHEREAS the provincial government has announced the discontinuation of the CLTP without identifying alternative training and certification opportunities, leaving current CLTP participants uncertain whether they will be able to complete the program or obtain certification, and would leave public library staff across the province with a lack of options for professional training and certification:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Ministry of Education share with BC public libraries the details from the CLTP program review and communicate as soon as possible its plan for establishing or identifying professional training and certification opportunities for library staff at a level equivalent to the Community Library Training Program.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Education**

Accessible professional learning is important in all sectors, and the library community is no exception. While professional learning opportunities for library staff are primarily the responsibility of libraries themselves, the Ministry will continue to support professional learning in this sector by identifying and sharing a wide-range of training and professional learning opportunities currently available across BC, Canada and in the US. Many of these opportunities have been posted on the Commons website, which is an online community for library staff to connect, discuss, and share resources and best practices. The Commons will be updated on a monthly basis with current offerings.

Government's investment in professional learning for public libraries' staff is being directed in new ways to support cross-sector needs of all library staff, including those in school and post-secondary libraries, as well as to support the professional learning needs of library trustees. An example of this work is our collaboration with the BC Library Association (BCLA) on a survey of all of their members and contacts. This survey will include a set of questions on professional learning and training and will help identify the learning needs and interests across the library community, as well as the best ways to meet them. This survey will reach approximately 1800 of the library community.

In addition, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Advanced Education are working with public, academic and school libraries to look for cross-sector professional learning opportunities through the Library Shared Services project.

Ministry of Education staff look forward to continuing to work with libraries, federations and other partners to encourage the development and sharing of professional learning opportunities throughout the library sector.

**LR9 Local Authority for Animals in Critical Distress**

WHEREAS authority to remove animals in critical distress from hot vehicles is specifically established in the *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act* and is limited to special provincial constables under the *Police Act*, such as the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA) and police officers, but not bylaw enforcement officers;

AND WHEREAS the *Community Charter*, which provides authority for local governments to establish bylaws for animal control, including seizure of animals "suffering" and entry onto and into property, cannot be interpreted in the same manner as the *Prevention of Cruelty to Animal Act* because specified authority has not been provided to bylaw enforcement officers by the Act;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Union of British Columbia Municipalities request the Province of British Columbia to:

Amend the *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act* to:

- Empower bylaw enforcement officers as "authorized agents" for the purpose of enforcing the provisions of the Act;
- Grant specific authority for local governments to establish, by bylaw, the authority to enter without a warrant into any premises (other than a dwelling house) and any vehicle, aircraft, or vessel for the purpose of seizing any animal in critical distress to relieve the critical distress of the animal; and

Amend the *Community Charter* to:

- Amend Section 48 to provide authority to seize animals in "critical distress" rather than suffering;
- Add a definition for "critical distress" similar to the definition in the *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act*; and
- Amend Section 16 to include authority to enter without a warrant into any premises (other than a dwelling house) and any vehicle, aircraft, or vessel for the purpose of seizing an animal in critical distress to relieve the critical distress of the animal, in the same manner as the *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act*.

**RESPONSE: Ministry of Agriculture**

Animal welfare is a key priority for government. Provisions to relieve distress (or critical distress) in animals are an important feature of the *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act*. The intent of this resolution, to relieve distress (or critical distress) in animals that are enclosed within a hot vehicle, is clear. Government is aware that certain situations arise when the immediate removal of dogs from hot vehicles is necessary to the welfare of the animal.

Government will review and discuss with relevant stakeholders the issue of dogs in hot vehicles.